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Theme and Form in the Poetry of John Oldham

by

Cooper Richerson Mackin

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Houston, Texas
April, 1962
An Engraving of Oldham. Courtesy of the British Museum.
For Cathy
Foreword

It is a pleasure to express my gratitude to the people who made possible the completion of this thesis. Professor Jackson I. Cope guided the project with patient encouragement. Professor Carroll Camden's helpful reading was only one instance of the assistance he has given so often in my years at Rice. Professor Alan D. McKillop made several useful suggestions for improving the thesis, and Professor Donald C. Mackenzie's close and vigorous examination gave it much more stylistic clarity than it had previously had. Professor Aubrey L. Williams first suggested the need for a study of Oldham.

The staff of the Fondren Library extended the courtesy and co-operation which everyone at Rice has come to take for granted. My wife, who typed the final copy, has responded with grace and good nature to innumerable demands on her patience during the years of graduate school.
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Introduction

It is puzzling that over two hundred years of admiration for Dryden’s fine elegy to John Oldham have produced so little in the way of Oldham scholarship. The elegy is in many anthologies; commentators are impressed by the admirable control and the restraint of Dryden’s praise. John Dennis’s evaluation of Oldham is only slightly less familiar than Dryden’s. In The Impartial Critick he has Freeman say:

Those are two special sparks indeed; Who will allow the Dead to have had no Faults, and the Living to have no good Qualities. When Mr. Oldham was alive, those two Gentlemen would allow him to have neither Wit nor Genius, which none but Sots could deny him; and they have the impudence to be angry now, if a Man will not allow him to have had both Delicacy, and a good Ear, which none but Blockheads can grant him.1

Considered in the light of Dennis’s own terminology, this judgment is about the same as Dryden’s. Wit is "a just mixture of Reason and Extravagance, and the Extravagance must be there, only in order to give the Reason the more lustre."2
Or, as Dryden puts it, ". . . Wit will shine / Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line." Genius is even more essential:

. . . there are Three Things which contribute to the Perfection of Poetry. The First is Nature, which is the Foundation and Basis of all. For Nature is the same Thing with Genius, and Genius and Passion are all one. For Passion in a Poem, is Genius and the Power of exciting Passion, is Genius in a Poet. 3

But in spite of this slightly qualified praise from two of the most demanding critics of Oldham's time, few have been sufficiently interested in him to judge for themselves whether or not Dryden's and Dennis's remarks are critically sound. Oldham's unpopularity, or rather lack of any popularity, in the nineteenth century is perhaps understandable in the light of both aesthetic theory and social convention; what is surprising is that there has been no complete twentieth-century edition, 4 nor developed critical view.

The details of Oldham's short life (1653-1683) are more or less accurately known. "'John Ouldham the sonne of John Ouldham the sonne of John Ouldham the elder minister was borne August 9° and baptized August 18 1653' at Shipton Moyne in Gloucestershire." 5 Oldham received his early education from his father and at Tetbury grammar school. He entered St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 1670, and
took his B. A. in 1674. Following his graduation from Oxford, he lived at home with his father for a few months, after which he began as an usher in Archbishop Whitgift's free school at Croydon, where he remained for about three years. During his stay there, he was visited by Rochester and some of the other wits. Edward Thompson recounts the occurrence in his 1770 edition of Oldham's works. Thompson's eccentricities have impugned his authority to some degree; however, modern commentators accept the validity of this particular incident, and Thompson's version is probably essentially accurate:

In this Place [Croydon] he [Oldham] composed many of his Pieces, which first stole into the World in Manuscript; And coming to the Sight of Lord Rochester, raised that witty Nobleman's Curiosity to see the Author, who, accompanied with the Earl of Dorset, Sir Charles Sedley, and some other noble Geniuses of that Reign, paid him a Visit, entirely on the Reputation of his Poerty. This Interview was attended with some Mirth. Lord Rochester sending by his Servant a verbal Compliment to Mr. Oldham, the Message was received by the Head Master, who was much surprized at the Invitation, but concluded it a Mistake, yet took the Honour of it to himself, not having a Capacity sufficient to know the Abilities of his Usher. The old Gentleman immediately dressed himself in his Summer Sabbath Apparel, and repaired to the Appointment, where all these Wits burned with Impatience for an Interview with a Man, who they had some Knowledge of from Description. When the tottering Pedagogue made his Entry, they were all on the Laugh; he began with a stupid dull Preface, of his Sense of the Honour they had done him; betraying, at the same Time, his Ignorance of such a Visit: when Lord Dorset, observing the Confusion of the Man, and the
laughing Gravity of Lord Rochester, released him with a candid assurance their Invitation was to Mr. Oldham, which the old Gentleman readily submitted to; confessing he had not Wit or Learning enough for such good Company.

Despite this manifest interest by Rochester and his friends, however, Oldham's literary career profited from it not at all. Oldham left Croydon in 1678, accepting a post as tutor to the grandson of Sir Edward Thurland, a retired judge, near Reigate. He stayed there until 1681, when he became a tutor to the son of Sir William Hickes, in his residence near London. He was befriended by the young Earl of Kingston (William Pierrepont), who invited him to become chaplain in his household. Oldham refused, but nevertheless found a patron in Kingston. In his last days, he became known to Dryden; he died of smallpox at Kingston's country seat, Holme-Pierrepont, in December, 1683.

Possibly the major cause of Oldham's lack of repute in recent times has been the comparative inaccessibility of his poetry, but with his contemporaries and his immediate posterity he was extremely popular. His collected works were issued twice in 1684, three times in 1686, in 1692, in 1695, 1698, 1703, 1710, 1722, and 1770. The next edition appeared in 1854. Robert Bell, the editor, omitted all those poems which he considered either bawdy, or artistically inferior, or both. The only modern edition,
by Bonamy Dobrée (1960), is merely a photographic reproduction of Bell's bowdlerized version. Dobrée feels, however, that all the deletions are quite justifiable:

The ... omissions are to be accounted for on two grounds, the first that the cautious taste of the Victorians would have turned his readers against him. So far as "The Satire upon a Woman, who by her Falsehood and Scorn was the Death of my Friend" a reader of to-day would heartily concur. It is not a satire, but a curse; the invention there is matchlessly loathsome. The "Satire upon a Printer" is odorous enough to be unpleasant. "Upon a Lady, who by overturning of a Coach had her Coats behind flung up [and what was undershewn to the view of the Company]", from Voiture, fails to be funny. ... The remainder of the omissions are of translations, paraphrases, or imitations from the classics. ... The reason for their omission given above may have partly operated here--they are, in the main, "amorous" poems, though they are harmless--but the truth is that though competent enough they are not so well done as they are by other poets. ... [Bell] has preserved all that is best and most characteristic.10

Perhaps the most striking of Bell's omissions is the "Satyr against Vertue," about which he makes this comment in the 1854 edition:

It must be confessed that the Satire against Virtue required, not an explanation, for its purpose is obvious enough, but an apology such as Oldham had the good sense to publish along with it ["An Apology for the foregoing Ode, by way of Epilogue"]. In that apology there is a sufficient justification for the exclusion of the piece from this volume. If Oldham found it necessary to deprecate its coarseness at a time when no language was considered too gross
for satire, there is still greater reason for rejecting it altogether in the present age. It may be inferred from the above Counterpart, published amongst his Remains, that had he lived to revise and collect his works, he would have cast out a foolish poem which he earnestly regretted having written. . . . Oldham mistook his powers when he attempted a masquerade of this kind, which requires to be sustained by the play of covert wit. His strength was in the opposite direction; and he always succeeded best when he went straight to his object.11

Dobrée agrees that the poem need not be printed, though for different reasons from Bell's:

Designed, he would like his readers to believe, for private circulation only, finding it pirated and 'embellished', he decided to print it with an 'Apology', the latter rendered necessary because some readers had taken it seriously. They ought not to have, though the beginning might be captivating to the more outrageous Restoration debauchees: it is a brash, rather obvious, even crude performance, and its absence from these pages need not be deplored [.].12

Oldham's own comment on the poem discloses neither the genuine repentance nor the cunning which Bell and Dobrée respectively impute to him:

As for the next Poem (which is the most liable to censure) tho the world has given it the Name of the Satyr against Vertue, he declares 'twas never design'd to that intent, how apt soever some may be to wrest it. And this appears by what is said after it, and is discernable enough to all, that have the sense to understand it, 'twas meant to abuse those, who valued themselves upon their Wit and Parts, in praising Vice, and to shew, that others of sober Principles, if they would take the same liberty in Poetry, could strain as high rants in Profaneness as they.
At first he intended it not for the publick, nor to pass beyond the privacy of two or three Friends, but seeing it had the Fate to steal abroad in Manuscript, and afterwards in Print, without his knowledge, he now thinks it a Justice due to his own Reputation, to have it come forth without those faults, which it has suffered from Transcribers and the Press hitherto, and which make it a worse Satyr upon himself, than upon what it was design'd.

As a result of Bell's omissions, and Dobrée's concurrence in them, nineteen of Oldham's poems are not generally available for modern students. Fortunately, the seventeenth-century editions are not extremely rare and can be purchased for a reasonable amount; but there is no question that a complete and authoritative edition is needed. H. F. Brooks has been at work on such an edition for several years, and if his thorough bibliographical presentation is any indication, his edition should fill the gap admirably. Meanwhile, there seems to be hardly any serious textual problem, and the early edition may be safely used.13

Twentieth-century criticism of Oldham may be discussed rather fully. It is limited almost entirely to the satires. Bonamy Dobrée seems to express the consensus when he writes, "It is through [Oldham's] satire that he deserves to live";14 and Harold F. Brooks, feeling the necessity of identifying Oldham, calls his bibliographical study A Bibliography of John Oldham, the Restoration Satirist. This is perhaps a
justifiable limitation, as the satires are historically more important than his other poems, although they comprise only about one-half of his works.

In 1918, Percy L. Babington began a flurry of Oldham commentary with his claim that Oldham, not Dryden, wrote "MacFlecknoe." Babington bases his contention on a handwritten copy of "MacFlecknoe" in the "Oldham Notebook" (Bodleian Library MS. Rawl. Poet. 123), and offers as support speculative biographical evaluations of Oldham and Dryden, and some similar passages in "MacFlecknoe" and the Oldham corpus. His conjecture is unlikely, and at any rate it can not be proved. Babington was answered immediately by two critics, the first of them H. M. Belden, who ridicules Babington's personality-trait criticism of Oldham and Dryden (e.g., Dryden would have been too magnanimous to write certain lines in "MacFlecknoe"), then by examination of techniques of versification shows "MacFlecknoe" to be totally unlike anything by Oldham and very similar to Dryden's other poetry. G. Thorn-Druzy's "Dryden's 'MacFlecknoe.' A Vindication" is a scathing and scornful answer to Babington.

A. F. B. Clark, in his book on Boileau, provides the most extended Oldham commentary before Brooks's bibliography in 1936, but unfortunately for Oldham, Clark chooses to use him as an unfavorable contrast to Boileau.
Oldham's poem in which Spenser's ghost tries to dissuade him from writing poetry (A Satyr Concerning Poetry), Clark believes, corresponds to Boileau's ninth satire, and he points out parallel passages to prove his contention, but "Boileau's poem is a triumphant and militant justification of his satirical mission . . . whereas Oldham's is a bitter, whining diatribe against an age that will praise but not pay its poets. . . . the greater part of the poem is spoiled by a coarseness which shows no influence of Boileau's taste." 19 Oldham's innovation in his translation of Juvenal's Third Satire, Clark continues, is the first adaptation transferring the names and places to modern London, an innovation which Oldham "unquestionably learned from Boileau's First and Sixth Satires." 20 Oldham's "A Letter out of the Country to a Friend in Town, Giving an Account of the Author's Inclination to Poetry," is indebted in general conception to Boileau's Second Satire. But "the satirical intention which Boileau knows how to introduce so cleverly in the midst of his own self-depreciation . . . is entirely absent in Oldham, whose poem is rather a self-centered study of the genesis of ideas in his own mind." 21 In short, "... the poet whose brief career forms a microcosm of the whole movement [Bolevian influence] was the one who let no aspect of Boileau's art (satire, mock-heroic or critical treatise in verse) escape
his attention or his imitation. Moreover, a close study of Oldham's poetry shews us that those poems in which the sobering and restraining of his naturally impetuous style is most apparent are those in which a Bolevian influence is most clearly traceable."22 The obvious contradiction in Clark's argument that Oldham was strongly influenced by Boileau, and that Boileau's influence would conduce to smoothness of meter, yet that Oldham's verse is characterized by "roughness," is recognized by Clark himself: "It may be asked, If Oldham submitted to the influence of Boileau more than any of his contemporaries, why is his style rougher and more violent than any of theirs?" But the answer is easy: "... Oldham's career as a satirist was hardly begun when it was brought to a premature end and there was no time for development and, secondly, that Oldham is far less rough in the satires where he is obviously under Boileau's influence than in the others."23 Boileau's influence is so far-reaching that even when Oldham and his contemporaries ventured out alone into the deep waters of classical imitation without Boileau's support, they show that they have so well assimilated his spirit that they choose satires he might very well have imitated though he did not. A striking example of this is Oldham's admirable imitation of Horace's ninth Satire of the First Book. ... This satire of Horace is so congenial to Boileau's style that it is a matter
for surprise that Boileau was not tempted to imitate it; however, he did not; yet, any one who reads Donne's awkward (though in parts extremely brilliant) attempt to convey Horace's little drama into English in his Fourth Satire, will not be easily persuaded that a young poet like Oldham, who shows traces of being, even in satire, partly of the tribe of Donne, could have achieved this masterpiece in the conversational style if he had not absorbed the very spirit of Boileau. 24

Finally, Le Lutrin definitely influenced the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, but "of course the terrific earnestness, the almost insanely sardonic nature of the irony and the monotonous hyperbole make the ultimate effect of these poems very different from that of Le Lutrin." 25

Since the first quarter of the century, after Clark's rather extreme comments, criticism of Oldham's poetry has been more subdued. The most important single contribution is Brooks's bibliography of Oldham's works. 26 He has performed an invaluable service to students of Oldham by personally examining and describing a large number of representative editions. In addition, he presents an accurate and scholarly biography which supplements that in the Dictionary of National Biography. Brooks comes closer than any other modern commentator to a meaningful statement of Oldham's historical significance:

...what he contributed toward the shaping of the satiric form in England altogether outweighs the artistic value of his work. In
the Satyrs upon the Jesuits he anticipated Dryden in writing heroic satire on a national theme. Satire, says Dryden, is undoubtedly a species of heroic poetry. This is the key to the development of Restoration satire form the burlesque of Hudibras to the mock-heroics of "MacFlecknoe," the fictitious heroics of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, and the true heroic poetry of Absalom. The Satyrs upon the Jesuits are the penultimate step in that progression. 

Oldham's trail-blazing in satiric imitation, Brooks thinks, is just as important:

"This mode of imitation," wrote Dr. Johnson, "in which the ancients are familiarized, by adapting their sentiments to modern topics, by making Horace say of Shakespeare what he originally said of Ennius, and accommodating his satires on Pantolabus and Nomentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our own time, was first practised in the reign of Charles the Second by Oldham and Rochester, at least I remember no instances more ancient." Johnson appears to be right: Oldham and Rochester were the first to adopt Boileau's practice. And Oldham, in the Advertisement to Some New Pieces, 1681, was the first to state the theory fully and explicitly, though he was following the hint of Dryden's Preface to Ovid's Epistles, 1680.

Besides Brooks, Weldon M. Williams is the only recent significant contributor to Oldham scholarship. His work consists of a pair of articles which appeared in 1943 and 1944. "The Genesis of John Oldham's Satyrs Upon the Jesuits," in which Williams attempts to show these satires as subject mainly to a native English rather than a Roman influence, places them in the tradition of the "ghostly
monologue" (for example, Sylla's ghost in Ben Jonson's *Catiline*, Oldham's avowed model for the first *Satyr upon the Jesuits*). Williams also sees influences from the "artist" satires, like Marvell's "Last Instruction to a Painter," and the "vision" poems, both conventional, or at least familiar types in the English tradition. However, he overlooks the possible influence of Donne's *Ignatius His Conclave*. "The Influence of Ben Jonson's *Catiline* upon John Oldham's *Satyrs Upon the Jesuits" contends that Oldham was far more widely influenced by Jonson's play than he had indicated in his preface to the *Satyrs Upon the Jesuits* (Oldham wrote, "The first Satyr he drew by Sylla's Ghost in the great Johnson, which may be perceived by some strokes and touches therein, however short they come of the Original"). In a reply to this essay, Chester W. Cable takes issue with Williams's slighting of Oldham's remark that he had also been influenced by the *Franciscanus* of Buchanan, and makes a convincing case that Oldham was borrowing, as he said in the preface, from Buchanan. Finally, David M. Vieth has raised new speculation about the beginning of Oldham's acquaintance with the Court Wits, basing his essay on a narrative prefixed to a previously unnoted, 1677-dated manuscript of the *Satyr against Vertue*. This narrative claims, in essence, that the Wits had been shown one of Oldham's early poems (which
one exactly is not clear), had found it difficult to believe that a "man, off so mean an education all his life . . . could be Master of so much witt and Reason," had thereupon chosen a theme in "dispraise off virtue" for the poet to write about, and that Oldham then "made this following poem upon the preceding subject, wch was so much extolld and comended, that they had nothing to say for them selves, but onely that he was the greatest witt and best poett of the Age."33 The conclusion Vieth draws from this anecdote is that Oldham's rise to fame was clearly connected with the Satyr against Vertue, which "would surely have brought Oldham to the notice of Rochester and the other Wits."34 This theory may be plausible, but it hardly explains Vieth's remark a few years later that the Satyr against Vertue was "probably designed as a satire on Rochester."35

It should be obvious from this resumé of modern scholarship that most studies of Oldham have been limited to examination of specific historical influence on a given poem, or group of poems. The two essays by Weldon Williams, for example, while they are interesting for their demonstration of the strong influence on the Satyrs upon the Jesuits of Jonson's Catiline (partially admitted by Oldham in his preface), do not deduce any real significance from this influence, either for Oldham, Jonson, or the poetic transition
from the Renaissance to the Augustan period. Clark's comments are even less acceptable, for in his desire to make Oldham a whipping boy for Boileau, he is often led to questionable conclusions. Akin to Clark's injudicious remarks are such unsupported generalizations as K. M. P. Burton's, that "Oldham . . . made the mistake of thinking that ingenious invective was enough for satire. He had a great deal of vigor, but he lacked imagination and constructive power."36 The work of these two critics represents the state of Oldham scholarship in this century: on the one hand, there is the narrow study concerned with only a very limited part of Oldham's work, and on the other, there is the off-handed and often unfair generalization about his "vigor" or his "force" or his "vituperation." Neither answers what seems needed in our criticism of Restoration poetry--a thorough examination of the bulk of the Oldham canon, with the objective to illuminate his ability and, on occasion, his excellence as a poet.
Notes


3 Advancement and Reformation of Poetry, Hooker, I, 246-247.

4 It is not known when the modern edition by Harold F. Brooks will be available.


7 Cf. his "Satyr, Addressed to a Friend That Is About to Leave the University and Come Abroad into the World," in which he denounces the dependency of such a position. See below, Chapter IV, pp. 148-151.

8 This biographical information is taken for the most part from the Dictionary of National Biography.

9 Brooks, Bibliography, pp. 25-33.


12 Poems of John Oldham, p. 7.

13 I have used the 1686 edition, The Works of Mr. John Oldham, Together with His Remains (Brooks #21).

14 Poems of John Oldham, p. 5.

15 "Dryden Not the Author of 'MacFlecknoe,'" MLR, XIII (1918), 25-34.


17 MLR, XIII (1918), 276-281.


19 pp. 118-119.

20 Ibid., p. 119.

21 Loc. cit.

22 Ibid., p. 409.

23 Ibid., p. 433.

24 Ibid., p. 435.

25 Ibid., pp. 440-441.

26 See note 5.
27 Bibliography, p. 8.

28 Ibid. Brooks slightly exaggerates Oldham's claim. See below, Chapter IV, p. 130.

29 PMLA, LVIII (1943), 958-970.

30 ELH, XI (1944), 38-62.

31 "Oldham's Borrowing from Buchanan," MLN, LXVI (1951), 523-527.

32 "John Oldham, the Wits, and A Satyr Against Vertue," PQ, XXXII (1953), 90-93.

33 The narrative does not mention Oldham by name, but Vieth is correct in saying that it undoubtedly refers to him.

34 Ibid., p. 93.


Chapter II

The Satyrs upon the Jesuits

Red hot with vengeance thus, I'll brand disgrace
So deep, no time shall e're the marks deface:
Till my severe and exemplary doom
Spread wider than their guilt, till it become
More dreaded than the Bor, and frighten worse
Than damning Pope's Anathema's, and curse.
(from the Prologue)

The Prologue to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits is spoken by a person overcome with indignation.¹ "For who can longer hold?" he asks, "when every Press, / The Bar and Pulpit too has broke the Peace?" Public feeling against the Jesuits is so strong that

... all with licence rail, and who will not,
Must be almost suspected of the PLOT,
And bring his Zeal, or else his Parts in doubt.
(7-9)

But, says the speaker, the arguments of opposing preachers will have little effect on the "harden'd" Jesuits; rather,

'Tis pointed Satyr, and the sharps of Wit
For such a prize are th' only Weapons fit;
Nor needs there Art, or Genius here to use,
Where Indignation Can create a muse:
Should Parts, and Nature fail, yet very spite
Would make the arrant'st Wild, or Withers write.
(26-31)
Henceforth, he says, "an endless War, / I and my Muse with them, and theirs declare"; and in a final outburst,

All this urge on my rank envenom'd spleen,
And with keen Satyr edg my stabbing Pen:
That its each home-set thrust their blood may draw,
Each drop of Ink like Aquafortis gnaw.  

(57-60)

These are the words of a righteous man outraged at the supposed activities of the Jesuits. A question that must be answered at the outset, it seems to me, is whether he is John Oldham, Usher at Croydon School and the grandson of "John Ouldham, the elder minister," or whether he is a character created by John Oldham as part of a literary technique.

The answer is indeed not self-evident. Satirists are always peculiarly susceptible to "biographical" criticism because their utterances seem so impulsive, but it is exactly this apparent artlessness which is responsible for satire's special force. The satirist, like the **bildungsroman** novelist, is committed to materials which must have recognizable autobiographical qualities—even if he has to invent the sense of autobiography; the suggestion of "engagement" is an essential part of the satiric structure. Robert C. Elliott's study of the power of the satirist may help explain why this is so. Elliott shows how in some early cultures, satirists were considered magicians with super-
natural powers and were held in great awe. The famous legend of Archilochus, "whose verses, steeped in poison, brought death to Lycambes and his daughter," is cited as support.² As satire gradually evolved from a purely social function to a literary form, the satirist continued to reflect faintly his original power of (actual) destruction, although "the interest in his poetic utterance is now on aesthetic value rather than on magical potency."³ At any rate, satirists frequently enhance the illusion of engagement by statements like those of Oldham's quoted above. In using such an image—an indignant man writing furiously, almost uncontrollably, rather than an artist working in a conscious form—the satirist greatly increases, by a seeming subjectivity, his contempt for the satirized values. Unfortunately, the reader who unquestioningly accepts such an image at face value is often led to deduce historical, real-life personality from a poet's artistic utterances; for example,

It is through his satire that [Oldham] deserves to live, and one would think that something in his character and circumstances destined him to be a writer in that form. He seems to have been born with what we would call 'a chip on his shoulder'; nothing 'did' so far as he was concerned. . . . His physical make-up might account for a good deal.⁴

and

In short, Dennis in his quarrel with Pope must
be judged partly as a satirist driven, like Juvenal, by savage indignation.5

While the temptation is great to draw such parallels, particularly with a relatively little-known poet like Oldham, it will invariably, if yielded to, cause a false perspective in reading a satiric poem. To insist that the speaker of the Prologue to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, or for that matter of the Satyrs themselves, is Oldham, is roughly equivalent to insisting that the "I" in the "Tell-Tale Heart" is Poe, or that the "I" in "The Married Couple" is Kafka. Yet none but the most untutored reader would confuse these latter, whereas many would maintain that essentially, Oldham is the "I" in his Prologue, and biographical deductions would in that case be quite valid. "In this way," writes Alvin Kernan, "satire is denied the independence of artistic status and made a biographical and historical document, while the criticism of satire degenerates into discussion of an author's moral character and the economic and social conditions of his time."6 Kernan further points out that the pose of not worrying about style is itself conventional: "... the very vigor of these efforts [to disclaim stylistic excellence] and their continuous appearance in satire suggest that they are themselves stylistic devices used in a perfectly conventional manner to establish the character and tone traditionally
thought appropriate for the satiric genre." In the Advertisement to Some New Pieces (1684), Oldham acknowledges a conscious distinction of genres when he writes:

In the Satyrs upon the Jesuits I confess, I did not so much mind the Cadence, as the Sense and expressiveness of my words, and therefore chose not those, which were best disposed to placing themselves in Rhyme, but rather the most keen, and tuant, as being the most suitable to my Argument. And certainly no one that pretends to distinguish the several Colours of Poetry, would expect that Juvenal, when he is lashing of Vice and Villany, should flow so smoothly, as Ovid, or Tibullus, when they are describing Amours and Gallantries, and have nothing to disturb and ruffle the evenness of their Stile.

Seventy years earlier, George Wither, whom Oldham cites as a forerunner in the Prologue to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, had voiced an almost identical defense, in his Abuses Stript and Whipt (1613):

This wants some fine Phrases, and such flourishes; as you find other mens writings stuft withall; And if that be a fault ... I could with ease have amended it, for it cost me more labour to observe this plainnesse, than if I had more Poetically trim'd it ... Many may dislike the harshnesse of the Verse, but you know, although it be not stately, yet it well enough befits the matter.  

And he added, in Wither's Motto (1621), "The language is but indifferent; for, I affected Matter more than Words." The point that emerges most clearly from these passages is that Oldham was working within the conventions of a particular
literary genre; and vituperation, harshness, and indignation are all conventional elements. Oldham hammers the point home:

Howbeit, to shew that the way I took, was out of choice, not want of judgment, and that my Genius is not wholly uncapable of performing upon more gay and agreeable Subjects, if my humour inclined me to exercise it, I have pitch'd upon these two [Bion and Moschus], which the greatest men of sense have allowed to be some of the softest and tenderest of all Antiquity.

He obviously felt in his own time the injustice of the kind of criticism that has been levelled at him in succeeding generations.

If it is realized that the indignant speaker of the Prologue to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits is part of an artistic attitude, there should be opened an approach to these satires much more fruitful than mere biographical or historical interpretation. In an important essay, Maynard Mack remarks of satire: "... what is desperately needed... is inquiry that deals neither with origins nor effects, but with artifice... it is not the author as man who casts these shadows on our printed page, but the author as poet: an instrument possessed by and possessing... an art." The thought is elaborated somewhat by Kernan: "... we need to approach satire in the way we do other poetry--as an art; that is, not a direct report of the poet's feelings and the literal incidents which
aroused those feelings, but a construct of symbols--situations, scenes, characters, language--put together to express some particular vision of the world." The approach thus emphasized by Mack and Kernan seems to me the most sensible one as far as literary criticism is concerned (although, to be sure, the biographer and the social historian, as well as the critic, would profitably distinguish between the poet as artist and the poet as historical personage). The historical, biographical, and even poetical influences which affect a given poem or group of poems should be considered--not as ends in themselves, however, but to enable us more cogently to perceive the artistic rationale of the poem. In reading the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, for example, it is interesting to know that Jonson's Catiline provided Oldham with some of his impetus, but especially so if this knowledge is then used as a key to a reading of the poems as poetry. In my discussion of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits I shall be concerned with influences, sources, and contemporary events--with, in short, "the literal incidents which aroused those feelings"--but these will, I hope, be contributory to an accurate and perceptive reading of the poems.

I

There are four Satyrs upon the Jesuits; the first, third,
and fourth are dramatic. In the first, the ghost of Henry Garnet praises his fellow-Jesuits in "private Cabal" for the murder of Godfrey; in the third, Loyola gives his "will"; and in the fourth, a statue of Loyola reveals the "rogueries of the Jesuits." The second Satyr is written in the conventional first person, a "direct" statement by the satirist. The three indirect satires are dramatic monologues, accompanied by what might pass as "stage directions." Prefixed to Satyr I is only a brief description of "setting": "Garnet's Ghost addressing to the Jesuits, met in private Cabal just after the Murder of Godfrey." Garnet then speaks the remainder of the satire, Oldham as satirist effacing himself completely and letting Garnet condemn himself and his colleagues by his own exhortations. If the external frame resembles a soliloquy, the basic effect is closer to that, for example, of a modern short story told in the first person. The speaker unwittingly reveals his own essential nature, and because the person of the author is not evident, great immediacy is attained. Garnet mouthing his own inquities is much more appalling than Oldham narrating them. C. W. Previté-Orton's comment that "[Oldham] had no sense of irony or dramatic fitness. Hence he places his objuries in Jesuit mouths, with an extraordinary mixture of triumphant, conscious wickedness and bigotry"\textsuperscript{12} seems to miss the point entirely.
The similarity to the drama continues in *Satyr III*, "Loyola's Will." The "stage directions" here are more substantial than in I or IV, but are essentially the same sort of thing. Loyola is presented on his death-bed, where he has summoned around him a select company of Jesuits to whom he intends to pass on his secrets. As they enter, one might almost say from stage left, Oldham sets the scene:

On Pillow rais'd, he do's their entrance greet,
And joys to see the wish'd Assembly meet:
They in glad Murmurs tell their Joy aloud,
Then a deep silence stills th' expecting Crowd,
Like Delphic Hag of old, by Fiend possesst,
He swells, wild Frenzy, heaves his panting Brest,
His bristling Hairs stick up, his Eye-Balls glow,
And from his Mouth long strakes of Drivel flow:  
Thrice with due Rev'rence he himself doth cross,
Then thus his Hellish Oracles disclose.  

(20-29)

Loyola then speaks for the rest of the satire, though a few stage directions from Oldham are inserted at crucial points. Like Garnet, Loyola glories in his wickedness, at times expressing some astonishing inversions of values, perhaps the most startling being this:

Ne're let the Nazarene, whose Badg, and Name
You wear, upbraided you with a conscious Shame:
Leave him his slighted Homilies, and Rules,
To stuff the Squabbles of the wrangling Schools;
Disdain, that he, and the poor angling Tribe,
Should Laws, and Government to you prescribe:
Let none of those good Fools your Patterns make;
Instead of them, the mighty Judas take.
Renown'd Iscariot, fit alone to be
Th' Example of our great Society:
Whose daring Guilt despis'd the common Road,
And scorn'd to stoop at Sin beneath a God.  

(273-284)
Satyr IV is slightly different in point of view from I and III. In this case, the stage directions are still present: "St. Ignatius his Image brought in, discovering the Rogueries of the Jesuits, and ridiculous Superstition of the Church of Rome." As these words might indicate, however, the viewpoint here is not the indirect denunciation of the former two, in which Garnet and Loyola unwittingly reveal their own evil, but a more direct satiric statement, and hence closer to Satyr II in nature although not in form. The statue speaks not with any joyous wickedness, like Garnet and Loyola, but in a spirit of revelation; as a statue, it has had an opportunity to witness the "rogueries" and "superstitions" referred to in the title. The frame is still dramatic monologue, but the perspective has shifted. The origins of the statue leave little doubt of the tone of this satire:

Once I was common Wood, a shapeless Log,  
Thrown out a Pissing-post for ev'ry Dog:  
The Workman yet in doubt, what course to take,  
Whether I'd best a Saint, or Hog-trough make,  
After debate resolv'd me for a Saint,  
And thus fam'd Loyola I represent.  

(1-6)

The overt method of the second and fourth Satyrs is a contrast to the subtler, backhanded condemnation of the first and third. There is little room for misunderstanding in the latter, but perhaps Oldham decided to be absolutely safe;
at any rate, he alternates the indirect slashes of Garnet's and Loyola's self-revelation with the direct blows of the satirist and the statue of Loyola.

In his use of a dramatic frame of reference in the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, Oldham was working within a long tradition while at the same time modifying that tradition to achieve an effect unusual in satire at the time. That satire is closely connected with the drama was considered almost a commonplace. Dryden, for example, in tracing the origins of satire, wrote:

Thespis, or whosoever he were that Invented Tragedy, (for Authors differ) mingl'd with them a Chorus and Dances of Satyres, which had before been us'd, in the Celebration of their Festivals; and there they were ever afterwards retain'd. The Character of them was also kept, which was Mirth and Wantonness . . . 13

Mary Claire Randolph, in her thorough study of the formal verse satire, comments on its "quasi-dramatic" structure, 14 and Alvin Kernan has made clear the importance for Elizabethan satire of an awareness of this dramatic structure:

The idea that poetic satire had its origin in a dramatic form distinguished for its viciousness of attack and spoken by rough satyrs was the basis for nearly all Elizabethan theories of satire . . . [for critics like Lodge and Puttenham] satire was dramatic: it originated in the drama; attacks on vice were delivered by a man playing the part of the satyr, and his speech conformed to his character. 15
Oldham undoubtedly was influenced in his decision to use a dramatic point of view by what had become an implicit relationship between the two genres. But Kernan's comment will serve as a convenient point of reference for the way in which Oldham modified the tradition. What Kernan emphasizes is the satiric mask which the poet assumes. Dramatic origins are important in this respect because an awareness of them forestalls confusion of the poet and the satiric character who does the talking in a satire. The satirist, that is to say, is a fictitious character created by the poet for a specific purpose, and carries out his "objurgations" in a specific way.

Kernan is quite right in his insistence on our critical awareness of the persona as a guard against biographical irrelevancy, but I believe he goes too far in his application of the idea. He fails to recognize that satire will not work and is not planned to work if the reader is constantly aware of the oblique point of view. We cannot treat on quite the same principles the drama, which effaces the author by shattering him into numerous characters at best and creates its illusion through an imitative action of some sort, and satire, part of whose structure is the illusion of the author's presence and "engagement" with "reality."

With this qualification, however, we as critics may find helpful in our reading of the Prologue to the Satyrs upon the
Jesuits, for example, a consciousness of the dramatic overtones that Kernan finds in the Elizabethan critics and authors who emphasize the dramatic origins of satire:

". . . they take it for granted that in satire the writer assumes the mask of the satyr either to avoid ill will or to discover folly more effectively. Satire was commonly thought . . . to derive from a play where actors took the part of satyrs and attacked their victims in a rough and savage fashion."16

The pose of the vir indignatus which Oldham assumes in these satires is much more typical of Elizabethan than of Restoration satire. The remarks of Kernan, which as I have suggested are applicable to some of Oldham's work, were made in connection with the satire of the earlier period. Moreover, a study of some other Restoration satires will show that Oldham is unusual in his use of the artistic pose which marked Elizabethan and Jacobean satire. A. F. B. Clark, in commenting on Oldham's Preface to the 1684 edition, says of the sentence, "And certainly no one that pretends to distinguish the several Colours of Poetry, would expect that Juvenal, when he is lashing of Vice and Villany, should flow so smoothly, as Ovid, or Tibullus, when they are describing Amours and Gallantries, and have nothing to disturb and ruffle the evenness of their Stile," that it "shows that, in this respect, Oldham was consciously following the Elizabethan
tradition." Almost without exception, satirists of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries conform to the tradition of the satiric "mask." For an example, let us look at some lines from the "first English satirist," Joseph Hall. In the Prologue to Book I of the *Virgidemiae* (1598), he describes briefly the aims of his satire:

```
Envie waits on my backe, Truth on my side:
Envie will be my Page, and Truth my Guide.
Envie the margent holds, and Truth the line:
Truth doth approve, but Envy doth repine.
For in this smoothing age who durst indite,
Hath made his pen an hyred Parasite,
To claw the back of him that beastly lives,
And pranck base men in proud Superlatives.

Goe daring Muse on with thy thanklesse taske,
And do the ugly face of vice unmaske.18
```

Although expecting lack of appreciation and possibly censure for his "truth-telling," the satirist feels compelled to write. The stimuli credited with moving Hall, or his fictitious satirist, to expressions of indignation are quite similar to those in Oldham's Prologue to the *Satyrs upon the Jesuits*. The evils of the age are too flagrant to pass unnoticed, an idea repeated by Hall in the first satire of Book V:

```
Pardon ye glowing eares; Needs will it out,
Tho brazen wals compas'd my tongue about,
As thicke as wealthy Scrobioes quicke-set rowes
In the wide Common that he did inclose,
Pull out mine eyes, if I shall see no vice,
Or let me see it with detesting eyes.19
```
Besides Hall, some other poets who used this idea are Marston in *Pigmalions Image and Certaine Satyres* (1598), Guilpin in *Skialeteia* (1598), Middleton in *Microcynicon or Sixe Snarling Satyres* (1599), and Rankins in *Seven Satyres* (1598).

This idea—*difficile est saturam non scribere*—derives ultimately, of course, from Juvenal; and Oldham's contemporaries not surprisingly considered him the "English Juvenal." What makes Oldham's use of the idea significant, however, is that it is much more common in the early part of the century than in the Restoration, and hence in an important respect Oldham was looking back toward earlier English artistic practice.

II

It is necessary for an understanding of the *Satyrs upon the Jesuits* to remember how high was national feeling against Catholics generally and Jesuits in particular. Even before the Gunpowder Plot there was a good deal of animosity, of course, but that event increased ill feeling to a fever pitch which never really subsided. The early part of the seventeenth century saw a great number of anti-Jesuit tracts which continued to some extent throughout the century, the Popish Plot only serving to climax a
panic which had been smoldering since the Gunpowder Plot. Several of these earlier works are similar in content to some of Oldham's most biting criticisms of the Jesuits. In 1609, for instance, there appeared a tract entitled *Aphorismes, or Certaine Selected Points of the Doctrine of the Jesuits, with a Treatise concerning Their Secret Practises and Close Studies, All Taken out of the Writings, Sayings, and Publike Acts, of the Jesuits and Other Popish Doctors*. The first "aphorisme" is quite similar to Loyola's comments on the pope in "Loyola's Will" (*Satyr III*):

The Bishop of Rome hath all manner of power, both spirituall and temporall; also, he hath authority, to command, and to forbid, and to proscribe, or to excommunicate: . . . these things must be held for Articles of the faith. And whosoever approveth not these things, or beleeveth them not, he is to be taken for a detestable Heretike.  

Though the Pope bee a man, yet because he is God's Vicar on earth (for which cause also therebelongeth unto him divine honor) he cannot erre in matters concerning Christian faith; although all other Ecclesiasticall persons, yea, and the very Counsellors themselves should' erre. . . .

Compare "Loyola's Will," lines 82-100 (Loyola exhorting his followers to strict obedience of the pope):

Let each without demur, or scruple pay A strict Obedience to the Roman Sway: To the unerring Chair all Homage Swear, Altho a Punk, a Witch, a Fiend sit there: Who e're is to the sacred Mitre rear'd, Believe all Vertues with the place conferr'd:
Think him establish'd there by Heav'n, tho he
Has Altars rob'd for bribes the choice to buy,
Or pawn'd his Soul to Hell for Simony:
Tho he be Atheist, Heathen, Turk, or Jew,
Blasphemer, Sacrilegious, Perjur'd too:
Tho Pander, Bawd, Pimp, Pathick, Buggeler,
What e're old Sodom's Nest of Lechers were:
Tho Tyrant, Traitor, Pois'ner, Parricide,
Magician, Monster, all that's bad beside:
Foulner than Infamy; the very Lees,
The Sink, the Jakes, the Common shore of Vice:
Strait count him Holy, Vertuous, Good, Devout,
Chast, Gentle, Meek, a Saint, a God, who not?

The "aphorismes" continue,

Now therefore Papists must every where labor
to oppresse by fire, sword, poysoning, gunpow-
der-plotts, warres, and other inventions and
devices, all heretikes whatsoever.²⁴

The "authority" for this passage is Garnet's trial, in which
Garnet said, "It is the judgement of all Catholikes, that
subjects are bound to put downe hereticall Princes, who are
injurious to the Catholike faith, specially if they have
power and meanes fit to doe it."²⁵ In Oldham's Satyr
II, this statement is magnified:

... you hear Garnet cry,
'I did it, and would do't again; had I
'As much of Blood, as many Lives as Rome
'Has spilt in what the Fools call Martyrdom;
'As many Souls as Sins; I'd freely stake
'All them, and more for Mother Church's sake.
'For that I'd stride o're Crowns, swim through
      a Flood,
'Made up of slaughter'd Monarch's Brains, and
Blood.
'For that no lives of Hereticks I'll spare,
'But reap 'em down with less remorse, and care
'Then Tarquin did the Poppy heads of old,
'Or we drop beads, by which our Pray'rs are
told.'

(171-182)

Loyola, advising how to get rid of heretics in Satyr III,
says:

Fiercer than Storms let loose, with eager haste
Lay Cities, Countries, Realms, whole Nature waste.
Sack, Ravish, burn, destroy, slay, massacre,
Till the same Grave their Lives, and Names interr.

(153-156)

And Garnet in Satyr I seems to support the remarks attributed
to him in the Aphorismes. His colleagues have done well
in murdering Godfrey, true, but

Would it were His (why should I fear to name,
Or you to hear't?) at which we nobly aim!
Lives yet that hated en'my of our Cause?
Lives He our mighty projects to oppose?
Can His weak innocence, and Heaven's care
Be thought security from what we dare?

(17-22)

He is referring, of course, to King Charles. His speech,
like Loyola's in Satyr III, also resembles another of the
"aphorismes":

So if the subjects, have a Lutheran or a Cal-
vinist, either King or Prince, that indeavoreth
to lead them into heresie (as now in England)
then those subjects are freed, from all homage
and bond of dutie . . . to depose, roote out,
and oppresse such a King or Prince.26

Loyola tells his disciples:
Kill Heresie, that rank, and pois'rous Weed,  
Which threatens now the Church to overspread:  
Fire Calvin, and his Nest of Upstarts out,  
Who tread our Sacred Mitre under Foot;  
Stray'd Germany reduce; let it no more  
Th' Incestuous Monk of Wittemberg adore:  
Make stubborn England once more stoop its Crown,  
And Fealty to our Priestly Sovereign own.  

(46-53)

A final example of the continuing charges against the Jesuits is provided by a comparison of the following "aphorisme" to a part of "Loyola's Will":

It is lawfull for Jesuits and other Catholike priest [sic] . . . especially when they are examined by heretically magistrates, to use the subtilty of equivocation.  

Loyola in Oldham's satire tells his followers:

But if ill Fortune should your Plot betray,  
And leave you to the rage of Foes a prey;  
Let none his Crime by weak confession own,  
Nor shame the Church, while he'd himself attone.  
Let varnish'd Guile, and feign'd Hypocrites,  
Pretended Holiness, and useful Lies,  
Your well-dissembled Villany disguise.  
A thousand wily Turns, and Doubles try,  
To foil the Scent, and to divert the Cry:  
Cog, sham, out-face, deny, equivocate,  
Into a thousand shapes your selves translate.  

(600-610)

The point of illustrating these similarities is not to suggest that Oldham was directly borrowing from the Aphorismes, of course, but that the kinds of charges levied against the Jesuits were more or less constant throughout the century, and were almost commonplaces to Oldham's
readers. The Aphorismes are only one of numerous publications of the sort in the early part of the century. In addition there were, for example, The Hellish and Horrible Councell, practised and used by the Jesuites, (in Their Private Consultations) when they Would Have a Man to Murther a King (1610); A Discourse to the Lords of the Parliament, as Touching the Murther committed upon the Person of Henrie the Great, King of Fraunce, Manifestly Proothing the Jesuites to be the Plotters and Principall Devisers of that Horrible Act (1611), which frequently mentions the Jesuits as "hellish" and "divells"; and a Discoverie of the Most Secret and Subtile Practises of the Jesuites. Translated out of the French (1610).

To a nation in which anti-Jesuit feeling was running strong already, the mysterious events surrounding the death of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey in 1678 seemed more than ever to incriminate the Jesuits. The history of the Popish Plot has been so frequently examined as to need no recapitulation here, but the specific matter of Godfrey's death may be recounted briefly, since it gives the direct stimulus for the first of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits.

In September, 1678, the infamous Titus Oates, together with his colleague Tonge, appeared before Godfrey, a well-known London magistrate, and requested that he take their deposition that the information contained in certain papers they
brought with them was true. Godfrey refused unless he were informed of the contents of the papers, and Oates accordingly provided him with a copy. Apparently Godfrey revealed the nature of the depositions to Edward Coleman, secretary to the Catholic Duchess of York. On October 17, Godfrey's body was found pierced with a sword. The details of his death have never yet been ascertained; there were contemporaries who thought, like Ogg the modern historian, that Godfrey committed suicide, but the great weight of opinion was that "The Jesuits procured it [Godfrey's death] because of the damning revelations in the papers entrusted to him by Oates." There are possible objections to this theory, and Ogg and Pollock both point them out, but its truth is in fact irrelevant as far as the Satyrs upon the Jesuits are concerned. The important thing is that Oldham uses the common accusation of the Jesuits to artistic advantage in Satyr I. In Garnet's ghost he spans the three-quarters of a century that separated the Gunpowder Plot (1605) from the Popish Plot, and the image of a gloating Garnet complimenting Godfrey's murderers could only stir in Oldham's audience panicky intimations of near fulfillment in Garnet's exhortation to the Jesuits to

Make Death, and Desolation swim in blood
Throughout the Land, with nought to stop the flood
But slaughter'd Carcasses; till the whole Isle
Become one tomb, become one fun'ral Pile.

(315-318)
A similar statement had been attributed to Loyola fifty years earlier, in Phineas Fletcher's *Apollyonists* (1627). In a pontifical council, Loyola offers to undertake the conversion of England:

That blessed Isle so often curst in vaine,
Triumphing in our losse and idle spight,
Of force shall shortly stoop to Rome and Spayne:
I'le take a way ne're known to man or spright.
To kill a king is stale, and I disdaine:
That fits a secular, not a Jesuite.
Kings, nobles, clergy, commons, high and low,
The flowre of England in one houre I'le mow,
And 'head all th' Isle with one unseen, unfenced blow.

(Canto IV, stanza 30)

The kinds of accusations that were levelled at the Jesuits remained, like the national antipathy that prompted them, constant throughout the century. The title of Fletcher's long work is taken from the spirit in hell who acts as a sort of patron devil for the Jesuits. His name and history illustrate one of the commonest and most violent anti-Jesuit charges:

Once Proteus, now Equivocus, he hight,
Father of cheaters, spring of cunning lies,
Of slie Deceite, and refin'd perjuries,
That hardly Hell itselve can trust his forgeries.

(Canto II, Stanza 5)

Jesuitical hypocrisy and equivocation, as may be seen from the "aphorismes" discussed above, were under constant attack. Equivocus, who is called "Apollyon" in Hell (Canto II,
Stanza 9), is the "Generall of those new stamp't friers, /
which have their root in that lame sooldier-saint, / Who
takes his ominous name from strife and fires" (Canto II,
Stanza 8). Fletcher's poem in several instances other
than the one just mentioned enunciates widespread charges
against the Jesuits, which Oldham uses so devastatingly in
his Satyrs, mainly, as we might expect, involving their
designs on the Protestant stronghold of England:

That little swimming Isle above the rest
Spight of our spight, and all our plots,
remains
And growes in happiness; but late our nest
Where wee and Rome, and blood, and all our
traines
Monks, nuns, dead and live idols, safe did
rest.

(Satan speaking in The Apollyonists, Canto I, Stanza 25)

Compare Garnet's statement in the first Satyr upon the
Jesuits:

Thrice damn'd be that Apostate Monk, from whom
Sprung first these Enemies of Us, and Rome:
Whose pois'nous Filth, dropt from ingend'ring
spawn,
Which now infest each Country, and defile
With their o'respreading swarms this goodly
Ile,
Once it was ours, and subject to our Yoke,
Till a late reigning Witch th' Enchantment
broke:
It shall again: Hell and I say 't: have ye
But courage to make good the Prophesie:
Not Fate it self shall hinder.

(142-152)\textsuperscript{35}

A scene in The Apollyonists which particularly resembles
Garnet's exhortation to his followers to perform prodigious feats of evil is the one where Satan impresses on his subordinates the extent of the evil he wishes them to do. Since they are doomed to everlasting punishment, he tells them,

0 let our worke equall our wages, let
Our Iudge fall short, and when His plagues are spent,
Owe more then He hath paid, live in our debt:
Let Heaven want vengeance, Hell want punishment
To give our dues: when wee with flames beset
Still dying live in endles languishment,
This be our comfort, we did get and win
The fires and tortures we are whelmed in:
We have kept pace, outrun His justice with our sin.
(Canto I, Stanza 38)

Garnet, after citing several examples of great wickedness, urges his successors to greater exploits:

Nor do I mention these great Instances
For bounds, and limits to your wickedness:
Dare you beyond, something out of the road
Of all example, where none yet have trod,
Nor shall hereafter: what mad Catiline
Durst never think, nor 's madder Poet feign.
(I, 231-236)

The demonstration of close ties between Loyola (and all Jesuits) and Satan which characterizes The Apollyonists and which was a commonplace in anti-Jesuit satire is expressed by a method even closer to Oldham's in Donne's Ignatius His Conclave. This point may be illustrated by comparing how the two poets use the trinity to demonstrate
Loyola's appalling evil. Oldham's "Thrice with due Rev-
'rence he himself doth cross, / Then thus his Hellish
Oracles disclose" (Satyr III, lines 28-29) has Loyola paying
external homage to the three persons of the trinity (the
sign of the cross) while he reveals his true, "Hellish"
nature in his advice to his disciples. In short, Jesuit
hypocrisy here is based on the most widely contradictory
impulses. Donne's use of the trinity more explicitly
suggests Loyola's devilish nature. Machiavelli speaks to
Satan in the presence of Loyola:

"... at last (as it was ever your fashion
to imitate heaven) out of your abundant loue,
you begot this deereely beloued sonne of yours,
Ignatius, which stands at your right hand.
And from both of you proceeds a spirit, whom
you haue sent into the world, who triumphing
both with Mitre and Crowne, gouernes your Mil-
itant Church there."["36

But if Loyola is here pictured as the son of Satan, he is
later given pre-eminence over his "father": "... Igna-
tius, more subtil then the Deuill, and the verier Lucifer of
the two."37 The essential relationship between Loyola and
the devil is reflected in the Jesuits' hypocritical equivoca-
cations (another common charge). Machiavelli continues
his address to Satan:

"As for those sonnes of Ignatius, whom either
he left alioe, or were borne after his death,
and your spirit, the Bishop of Rome; how iustly
and properly may they be called Equiovocal men?
And not only Equivocall in that sence, in which the Popes Legates, at your Nicene Council were called Equivocal, because they did agree in all their opinions, and in all their words: but especially because they have brought into the world a new art of Equivocation. O wonderfull, and incredible Hypercritiques; who, not out of marble fragments, but out of the secretest Records of Hell itselue: that is, out of the minds of Lucifer, the Pope, and Ignatius, (persons truly equivocall) have raised to life againe the language of the Tower of Babel, so long concealed, and brought ys againe from vnderstanding one an other."\textsuperscript{38}

The similarity between Donne's and Oldham's indictments of the Jesuits, like the similarity between those of Oldham and Fletcher, is largely explicable as evidence of a conventional denunciation. More interesting, perhaps more significant, is the similarity in artistic point of view between Ignatius His Conclave and the Satyrs upon the Jesuits. Donne, as author, remains like Oldham aloof from the events he narrates. He does not comment on the great evil or hypocrisy of Ignatius, but simply relates a scene in which one of the characters "praises" Ignatius and Satan for these qualities.\textsuperscript{39} The result is quite like that of Oldham's Satyrs, where Garnet and Loyola reveal their own evil; Oldham as author does not, except for a few instances of "stage-setting" in "Loyola's Will," evaluate the characters for his readers. The objectivity which Donne and Oldham simulate may be easily perceived by comparing their work with Fletcher's Apollyonists, for example.
Fletcher frequently inveighs against the actions he is narrating, in the traditional manner of the satirist. The beginning of his poem is a good example:

Of men, nay Beasts: worse, Monsters; worst of all,
Incarnate Fiends, English Italianat;
Of Priests, O no! Masse-Priests, Priests-Cannibal;
Who make their Maker chewe, grinde, feede, grow fat
With flesh divine: of that great Citie's fall,
Which borne, nur'st growne with blood, th' Earth's empress sat:
Cleans'd, spous'd to Christ, yet backe to whoredome fel,
None can enough, something I faine would tell.
How blacke are quenched lights! Falne's Heaven's a double Hell.

(Canto I, stanza I)

In short, Oldham's technique is closer to Donne's than to Fletcher's by virtue of its dramatic presentation—the greater the (apparent) authorial objectivity of a work the closer it is to the drama as a form. At the end of a lengthy speech by Loyola in Ignatius His Conclave, Donne's narrator remarks,

Truely I thought this Oration of Ignatius very long: and I began to thinke of my body which I had so long abandoned, least it should putrifie, or grow mouldy, or bee buried; yet I was loath to leaue the stage, till I saw the play ended.

But as Oldham indicates in his Advertisement to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, it was to a much more specifically
dramatic work that he turned for his real impetus in the first and most devastating of the *Satyrs*: "The first Satyr he drew by Sylla's Ghost in the great Johnson, which may be perceived by some strokes and touches therein, however short they come of the original." Even aside from his admiration of Ben Jonson as a poet (evident from his "Ode upon the Works of Ben. Johnson"), the first scene of *Catiline* (1611) would seem to have recommended itself to Oldham for several reasons, judging from the similarities between it and "Garnet's Ghost." We may find in the brief monologue of Sylla's ghost the seeds of both content and technique of that longer monologue in Oldham's *Satyr I*. Clearly, from the full title of this first satire, Oldham visualized Garnet's harangue dramatically, as though, like Sylla, Garnet were a character on stage ("Garnet's Ghost addressing to the Jesuits, met in private Cabal just after the Murder of Godfrey"); furthermore, frequent attention is called to the fact that Garnet is talking to someone, urging a course of action—like Sylla to Catiline. The advantage of using such a dramatic method is apparent. The reader, like the spectator in a play, is placed in a much more intimate relationship with Garnet's evil than if he were constantly made conscious of a narrative frame. Moreover, Garnet like Sylla would be for many Englishmen the summation of evil, and the appearance of his ghost would almost certainly
cause the scene to reek of burning sulfur and brimstone. The constant reminders in Oldham's satire that Garnet is a hellish spirit are necessarily in the form of Garnet's own references to hell, similar to Sylla's references in Jonson's play:

Behold I come, sent from the Stygian Sound,  
As a dire Vapour that had cleft the Ground,  
T' ingender with the Night, and blast the Day;  
Or like a Pestilence that should display  
Infection through the World: Which thus I do.  
(Discovers Catiline in his Study)  
Pluto be at thy Counsels, and into  
Thy darker Bosom enter Sylla's spirit  
All that was mine, and bad, thy Breast inherit.  
(Catiline, I. I. 11-18)

Not surprisingly in the light of Oldham's admitted debt to Catiline, there are several passages in Sylla's monologue which are reflected in "Garnet's Ghost." Continuing the lines just given, Sylla corrects himself:

Did I but say (vain voice!) all that was mine?  
All that the Gracchi, Cinna, Marius would,  
What now, had I a Body again, I could,  
Coming from Hell, what Fiends would wish should be,  
And Hannibal could not have wish'd to see,  
Think thou, and practise.  
(20-25)

He advises Catiline to consider all his own former evils as nought—rapes, incest, murders, parricide. These, Sylla says, "are too light," for fate has destined Catiline for a far greater deed: "The Ruin of thy Country." He then climaxes this prophecy:
That is thy act, or none.
What all the several ills that visit Earth,
(Brought forth by Night with a sinister birth)
Plagues, Famine, Fire, could not reach unto,
The Sword, nor Surfeits; let thy Fury do:
Make all past, present, future ill thine own;
And conquer all Example in thy one.

(48-54)

Similarly Garnet, urging his fellows to unsurpassed and unprecedented heights of wickedness, tells them to try "something out of the road / Of all example," and continues,

what mad Catiline
Durst never think, nor's madder Poet feign.
Make the poor baffled Pagan Fool confess,
How much a Christian Crime can conquer his:
How far in gallant mischief overcome,
The old must yield to new, and modern Rome.
Mix Ills past, present, future, in one act;
One high, one brave, one great, one glorious Fact,
Which Hell, and very I may envy.

(I, 235-243)

The specific reference to Catiline and Jonson shows, of course, that the play was prominent in Oldham's thinking when he composed these lines. Just as Catiline's evil was to be directed toward the annihilation of Rome—a feat as yet unaccomplished in spite of conspiracies and natural disasters—so the Jesuits are to direct theirs toward the hitherto uneffected destruction of England (see Satyr I, lines 326-337, quoted below on page 53).

The striking aspect of these comparisons is not the similarities they disclose, since Oldham openly credits Catiline in his Advertisement. Rather, it is the dissimilar-
ity in the poetic presentation of similar ideas. Oldham's Garnet emerges as a more fearsome character than Jonson's Sylla largely because, time after time, he builds his exhortations to appalling climaxes by a sort of amplification of meaning. Garnet seems unable to rein himself in; it is as though he feels compelled in every utterance to express new heights of evil, and so he keeps piling on qualifications and more frenzied exhortations:

Kill like a Plague, or Inquisition; spare
No Age, Degree, or Sex; only to wear
A Soul, only to own a Life, be here
Thought crime enough to lose 't: no time, nor place
Be Sanctuary from your outrages. (281-285)

Garnet would seem to have included everyone, but he hammers his point home in a series of specific cases: "Spare not in Churches kneeling Priests at Pray' r," "Spare not young Infants smiling at the breast," "Pity not Virgins," "Nor let gray hoary hairs protection give / To Age," "Make Children by one Fate with Parents die, / Kill ev'n revenge in next Posterity." Finally Garnet finds the image he is seeking:

Make Death, and Desolation swim in blood
Throughout the Land, with nought to stop the flood
But slaughter'd Carcasses; till the whole Isle
Become one tomb, become one fun'ral Pile;
Till such vast numbers swell the countless summ,
That the wide Grave, and wider Hell want room. (315-320)
Sylla seems only mildly naughty compared with this all-encompassing evil. My aim will be, therefore, not merely to point out interesting parallels between Jonson and Oldham, but to examine the disposition Oldham made of the seeds he got from Jonson's play. Weldon Williams has said correctly of Oldham's debt to Jonson:

... Oldham does not duplicate or even closely paraphrase the lines. He does not follow the original order of ideas and he expands his poem much beyond the few lines of the original. He does, however, ... elaborate upon them in his characteristic fashion, expanding, developing, multiplying instances, and piling up climaxes.42

It is a comment that might be made equally about the other works examined above, all similar to Oldham's. The answers to the questions of why Oldham made such changes and what their effect was on the structure of his poem will, I believe, give the key to an accurate and perceptive reading of "Garnet's Ghost" and of all the Satyrs upon the Jesuits.

III

The changes that Williams discusses are indicative of Oldham's consistent poetic practice; he constantly "elaborates, expands, multiplies instances, and piles up climaxes." One form which these "expansions" commonly take is a build-
up of categorical statements, for example the very first lines of the Prologue:

For who can longer hold? when every Press,
The Bar and Pulpit too has broke the Peace?
When every scribbling Fool at the alarms
Has drawn his Pen, and rises up in Arms?
And not a dull Pretender of the Town,
But vents his gall in Pamphlets up and down?
When all with licence rail . . .

(1-7)

Here, at the beginning of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, is manifest an artistic device which to a great extent informs the whole series, and the following passage from very near the end of the Prologue will more nearly illustrate the precise effect which Oldham intended it to achieve:

The rage of Poets damn'd, of Womens Pride
Contemn'd, and scorn'd, or proffer'd lust denied:
The malice of Religious angry Zeal,
And all, cashier'd resenting Statesmen feel:
What prompts dire Hags in their own blood to write
And sell their very souls to Hell for spite:
All this urge on my rank envenom'd spleen,
And with keen Satyr edg my stabbing Pen:
That its each home-set thrust their blood may draw,
Each drop of Ink like Aquafortis gnaw.

(51-60)

In this invocation to his muse, Indignation, Oldham enumerates the most spiteful emotions he can think of, then asks for them all; he wants to encompass all spite, as it were, in his satires, so that each thrust will be painful to the Jesuits. None must be wasted, for the all-inclusive evil of the Jesuits demands an all-inclusive indignation as its foe:
But to a sear'd Ignatian's Conscience,
Harden'd, as his own Face, with Impudence,
Whose Faith in contradiction bore, whom Lies,
Nor nonsense, nor Impossibilities,
Nor shame, nor death, nor damning can assail:
Not these mild fruitless methods will avail.  
(20-25)

Since these "methods" are useless in the face of such a
super-evil foe, an equally super-indignant muse must join
with her poet in opposition:

It is resolv'd: henceforth an endless War,
I and my Muse with them, and theirs declare;
Whom neither open Malice of the Foes,
Nor private Daggers, nor St. Omer's Dose,
Nor all, that Godfrey felt, or Monarchs fear,
Shall from my vow'd, and sworn revenge deter.  
(32-37)

In the Satyr which follows, "Garnet's Ghost," it is
easy to forget, in the light of Oldham's description of the
Jesuits' immense evil, that he has thus attributed to him-
self an equal power of denunciation. The almost infinite
wickedness of Garnet and his fellows is implied time after
time by the same kind of categorical statements as those in
the Prologue. Early in his harangue, Garnet accuses his
colleagues of reticence in attempting the assassination of
King Charles:

Are you then Jesuits? are you so for nought?
In all the Catholick depths of Treason taught?
In orthodox, and solid pois'ning read?
In each profounder art of killing bred?  
(23-26)
This passage comes at a point when Garnet has not yet begun his fever-pitch exhortations, but it is a grim forecast. A hundred lines later, the categorical exhortation has become much more frenzied, but it still is basically the same device. Garnet adjures his listeners never to let "inward cowardice" (conscience) interfere with their evil:

Shame, Faith, Religion, Honor, Loyalty,
Nature it self, whatever checks there be
To loose, and uncontrol'd impiety,
Be all extinct in you. . . .

(123-126)

Garnet continually makes such demands. He feels driven, it seems, to keep trying for the image that will convey his vision of a truly all-encompassing evil, and so he consistently caps his lists of villainies with something equivalent to "all this and more." Sometimes, as in lines 281-285, quoted on page 49, he reverses the process. There he tells his fellows to "spare / No age, Degree, or Sex," and then goes on to elaborate on each of these categories. But the more usual method is that used when he tells the Jesuits to destroy England, something as yet unaccomplished:

What neither Saxon rage could here inflict,
Nor Danes more savage, nor the barb'rous Pict;
What Spain, nor Eighty-Eight could ere devise,
With all its Fleet, and freight of cruelties;
What ne'er Medina wish'd, much less could dare,
And bloodier Alva could with trembling hear;
What may strike out dire Prodigies of old,
And make their mild, and gentler acts untold;
What Heav'ns Judgments, nor the angry Stars,
Foreign Invasions, nor Domestick Wars,
Plague, Fire, nor Famine could effect or do;
All this, and more be dar'd, and done by you.
(326-337)

The sense of virtually all-encompassing evil with which Oldham infuses Garnet's speech, by basing certain images on the all-encompassing category, is developed by other, closely related imagistic techniques as well. Most noticeable, perhaps, is the frequent repetition of the word "vast"—so frequent, in fact, as to render detailed citation both unnecessary and impracticable. Its recurrence supports the idea of total and far-reaching evil implied by the categorical imagery, and in addition suggests the essential metaphor by which this evil is expressed in "Garnet's Ghost." Precisely how this concept of "vastness" assumes a central importance in the poem may be illuminated by examining several key passages in which the word "vast" is used. Early in his harangue, Garnet, striving to encourage his successors by describing enormously evil precedents, mentions first Catiline, then the "Sect'ries (an ignoble crew, / Not worthy to be rank'd in sin with you)," then Clement and Ravillac, the assassins of Henry III and Henry IV of France ("Let our great Clement, and Ravillac's name, / Your Spirits to like Heights of sin inflame"). Then he hits on what is, to him, the most evil of all—himself:
And if these cannot move you, as they shou'd,  
Let me, and my example fire your blood:  
Think on my vast attempt, a glorious deed,  
Which durst the Fates have suffer'd to succeed,  
Had rival'd Hells most proud exploit, and boast,  
Ev'n that, which wou'd the King of Fates depos'\'d,  
Curst be the day, and ne're in time inrol'\'d,  
And curst the Star, whose spiteful influence rul'\'d  
The luckless Minute, which my project spoil'\'d:  
Curse on that Pow'\'r, who, of himself afraid,  
My glory with my brave design betray'\'d:  
Justly he fear'\'d, lest I, who strook so high  
In guilt, should next blow up his Realm, and Sky:  
And so I had; at least I would have durst,  
And failing, had got off with Fame at worst.  

(62-76)

The extent of Garnet's ambition is evident from line 66 alone  
("Had rival'd Hells most proud exploit, and boast"): had  
his attempt only been as "vast" in fruition as in conception,  
it would have made Garnet equal to Satan himself, the symbol  
of total evil.

Garnet continues by telling his listeners that if they  
had "but half my bravery in Sin," they would by now have  
succeeded in the assassination of King Charles:

H'ad dy'd by this, and bin what I am now,  
Or what His Father is: I would leap Hell  
To reach His Life, tho in the midst I fell,  
And deeper than before.  
Let rabble Souls, of narrow aim, and reach,  
Stoop their vile Necks, and dull Obedience preach:  
Let them with slavish aw (disdain'\'d by me)  
Adore the purple Rag of Majesty,  
And think 't a sacred Relick of the Sky:  
Well may such Pools a base Subjection own,  
Vassals to every Ass, that loads a Throne:  

(79-90)
In a final, fantastic inversion, Garnet concludes this line of thought, parodying the prophecy intended to soften the pain of the lost paradise in Eden:

Vassals to every Ass, that loads a Throne:
Unlike the soul, with which Proud I was born,
Who could that sneaking thing a Monarch scorn,
Spurn off a Crown, and set my foot in sport
Upon the head, that wore it, trod in dirt.
(90-94)

"Vast," we may therefore see, means to Oldham no less than "indefinite," and approaches "infinite." The limits to the vastness of the Jesuits' evil are the same as those of Satan's, an identification insisted on at several points in the poem other than the extensive example just examined. Warning the Jesuits never to let such "toys" as the Bible "infect your Souls with good," Garnet says:

Let never bold incroaching Virtue dare
With her grim holy face to enter there,
No, not in very Dream: have only will
Like Fiends, and Me to covet, and act ill:
Let true substantial wickedness take place,
Usurp, and Reign; let it the very trace
(If any yet be left) of good deface.
(112-118)

Inevitably, Garnet becomes Oldham's symbol for not only the Society of Jesus, but the entire Roman church. Consequently, the frequent identifications or implicit similarities between Rome and Hell are another manifestation of the vastness of Catholic evil. Ravillac's memory
will "through Age to come / Stand sacred in the Lists of Hell, and Rome" (53-54), Garnet says early in the poem. His easy assumption of the role of spokesman for both places is significant, for it reflects an essential link between the original Hell and its earthly vicar, Rome. The casualness with which he seems to place himself on a level with devils ("Like Fiends, and Me to covet, and act ill") is in the same vein. The result is the more chilling when the full implications of Garnet's ambitions are considered. Historically a product of Rome, the earthly hell, Garnet is now one of the greatest lights in Hell itself. So evil is he, in fact, that he aspires to exceed Satan himself (lines 66 ff., page 55 above). The nearness of his success, attested by the Gunpowder Plot and now by the Popish Plot, goes far to minimize the distance between Rome and Hell itself--almost, in fact, to eliminate it altogether, so that the equations are virtually made: Rome is Hell; the Jesuits are devils; Garnet is Satan.

The idea of a vast capacity for evil is closely related, then, to Garnet's ambitious diabolism, which is in turn reinforced by the virtual identification of Rome and Hell. These threads are neatly tied together in the following passage, in which Garnet praises Henry IV of France for massacring the Huguenots in the gruesome St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572:
Never had Rome a nobler service done,  
Never had Hell; each day came thronging down  
Vast shoals of Ghosts, and mine was pleas'd,  
& glad,  
And smil'd, when it the brave revenge survey'd.  

(227-230)

But they have their most appalling expression a few lines later. Garnet recalls Catiline's wickedness, but scorns it as insufficient. We looked at these lines earlier in another context; let us now read them again, noticing how they combine all the various techniques by which Garnet's evil is illuminated:

Make the poor baffled Pagan Fool confess,  
How much a Christian Crime can conquer his:  
How far in gallant mischief overcome,  
The Old must yield to new, and modern Rome.  
Mix Ills past, present, future, in one act;  
One high, one brave, one great, one glorious Fact,  
Which Hell, and very I may envy----------  
Such as a God himself might wish to be  
A Complice in the mighty Villany  
And barter 's Heaven, and vouchsafe to die.  

(237-246)

This is the climax of Garnet's emulation of Satan. He exhorts his followers to commit a crime so tremendous that it will rival that first crime, whose expiation required a "God himself" to "barter 's Heaven, and vouchsafe to die"--the cosmos-shattering sin in Eden, a magnificent triumph for Garnet's master. Here also the limits of "vastness" are clarified. Satan's successful temptation of Eve belongs not to history, but to existence itself;
it transcended time to extend to all humanity simultaneously. Therefore, the only evil vast enough to rival Satan's original evil must obliterate time, must encompass all evil from the beginning to the end in an illimitable grasp; must "mix Ills past, present, future, in one act."

Garnet's realization of this necessity is evident in several passages. For example, the thing he most admires about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre is that

... whole Myriads [of Huguenots] died by th' great, Soon as one single life; so quick their Fate, Their very Pray'rs, and Wishes came too late. (212-214)

He likes the--one can only say "vastness"--of innumerable lives being taken at once, in a pleasing disregard of time. He urges his audience to a similar course:

Be swift, and let your deeds forestall intent, Forestall ev'n wishes, e're they can take vent, Nor give the Fates the leisure to prevent. (251-253)

And the passage that must be considered the climax of Garnet's tirade, as of the poem, takes for its keynote the atemporal essence of the illimitable evil urged by Garnet:

Make Children by one Fate with Parents die, Kill ev'n revenge in next Posterity: So you'll be pester'd with no Orphans cries, No Childless Mothers curse your Memories. Make Death, and Desolation swim in blood Throughout the Land, with nought to stop the flood
But slaughter'd Carcasses; till the whole Isle
Become one tomb, become one fun'ral pile;
Till such vast numbers swell the countless summ,
That the wide Grave, and wider Hell want room.
(311-320)

Here is the culmination of all Garnet's evil ambition,
couched in diction which clearly connotes the poem's under-
lying metaphor. By anticipating the future, Garnet hopes
to forestall the possibility of any historical modification
of his crime; furthermore, the implicit categorical image
of the passage is more horrible than any of those explicit
ones earlier in the poem—Garnet wants every man, woman,
and child in England dead. "Vast numbers" means all English-
men, and to Oldham's audience there was a sense in which this
would mean virtually the whole world.

That England was an "epitome of the world" was a
frequently enunciated corollary of the idea of the microcosm-
macrocosm, an idea evident in much of Oldham's poetry, in-
cluding the Satyrs upon the Jesuits. Marjorie Nicolson has
rendered unnecessary a substantial account of this concept
by her typically thorough work in The Breaking of the Circle.43
Man's ability to see himself as a "little world made cunning-
ly," a reproduction in miniature of the "geocosm" and the
universe—so apparent in the literature of the late sixteenth
and early seventeenth centuries—was irrevocably weakened,
Professor Nicolson shows, by the discovery and eventual
widespread use of the telescope, which revealed the constant
mutability of the universe. But even so, the microcosmic-macrocosmic analogy continued to be made throughout the Restoration and on into the eighteenth century. Professor Nicolson cites, for instance, a medical treatise by Dr. Thomas Shirley, published in 1672, entitled A Philosophical Essay, declaring the probable Causes whence Stones are produced in the Greater world . . . being a Prodromus to a Medicinal Tract concerning the Causes and Cures of the Stone in the Kidneys and Bladders of Men, and she sees Swift's Tale of a Tub (1704) as "the literary death-blow to the microcosm." John Dennis found the analogy helpful in explaining the role of Reason, in his Advancement and Reformation of Poetry (1701):

... the more Rule and Order, and Harmony, we find [in Nature] in the Objects that strike our Senses, the more Worthy and Noble we esteem them. ... Now Nature, taken in a stricter Sense, is nothing but that Rule and Order, and Harmony, which we find in the visible Creation. The Universe owes its admirable Beauty, to the Proportion, Situation, and Dependance of its Parts. And the little World, which we call Man, owes not only its Health and Ease, and Pleasure, nay, the Continuance, of its very Being, to the Regularity of the Mechanical Motion, but even the Strength too of its boasted Reason, and the piercing Force of those aspiring Thoughts, which are able to pass the Bounds that circumscribe the Universe.

Garnet seems clearly in the lines quoted on pages 59-60 to conceive of the devastation of England as a microcosm of universal devastation, a conception which correlates with his desire to exceed Satan's evil. He sees contained in
himself the precise pattern of the all-encompassing evil symbolized by Satan. In terms of satiric comment, Oldham is using Garnet as the center of a series of ever-widening circles of evil purpose: Garnet personifies Jesuitical ambition, which aims to destroy first all heretics, then all England, then all the world, and finally the entire universe.

The micro-macrocosm idea helps explain why Garnet wants to cut across temporal definition in his ambition to create total evil, and it also helps illuminate his repeated use of "vast" in its fullest significance. For the word "vast," like the concept of the microcosm, has spatial implications. History, a record of Becoming, is by definition inextricably involved in time; a timeless act, on the other hand, like Satan's corruption of Paradise--cosmically significant,\(^{47}\) meaningful for all men in all times, cutting across and transcending history--is enunciated in its greatest significance by atemporal referents.\(^{48}\) Likewise, Garnet's professed desire to obliterate temporal limitations and thus to make his crime cosmic is expressed by his exhortation to "Mix Ills past, present, future, in one act." It is the evil act--the one deed that will be for all times, a part not of Becoming but of Being--which he envisions, and the total desolation of England seems to him an accomplishment commensurate with the vision. Even Hell will not be "wide" enough to
enclose so vast a Death. At last Garnet will have surpassed his envied master.

The vision of cosmic evil with which Oldham endows Garnet foreshadows the imagistic and thematic conception of the whole series of satires on the Jesuits. In all of them Oldham is more or less concerned to demonstrate the immensity of the Jesuit capacity for evil, and granting some modifications resulting from the differing points of view of the four Satyrs, he accomplishes his aim by the same techniques as in "Garnet's Ghost." Satyr II, which is written as a direct expression of the satirist, develops the idea, indirectly presented through Garnet in "Garnet's Ghost," of the Jesuits as the worst conceivable affliction:

Nay, if our sins are grown so high of late,
That Heav'n no longer can adjourn our fate;
May 't please some milder Vengeance to devise,
Plague, Fire, Sword, Dearth, or any thing but this.
Let it rain scalding Showers of Brimstone down,
To burn us, as of old the lustful Town:
Let a new deluge overwhelm agen,
And drown at once our Land, our Lives, our Sin.
Thus gladly we'll compound, all this we'll pay,
To have this worst of Ills remov'd away.  

If this plea for "Plague, Fire, Sword, Dearth, or any thing but this" seems rhetorical bravado, we need only recall that at the time the Satyrs upon the Jesuits were published, most of Oldham's readers could still remember only too vividly the Great Plague of 1665 and the events of the
"annus mirabilis"—the Great Fire and the war with Holland in 1666. These disasters had taken a great toll of English life, and the fire and plague especially still troubled the dreams of Englishmen by their sheer horror and vast destruction. Only complete annihilation could have seemed much worse, and that is precisely, I think, the situation with which Oldham implicitly equates the continued presence of the Jesuits, by deeming as lesser evils the plague and fire.

Many Englishmen had believed those grievous afflictions of a decade earlier manifest expressions of divine wrath. Oldham picks up the idea, concentrating on the plague as the more widespread and nearly all-encompassing catastrophe, and reaches back through ages to a similar instance of God’s punishment:

When God his stock of wrath on Egypt spent,  
To make a stubborn Land, and King repent,  
Sparing the rest, had he this one Plague sent;  
For this alone his People had been quit,  
And Pharaoh circumcis’d a Proselyte.  

(15-19)

Clearly, so enormous an affliction as the Jesuits must be the result of a guilt so enormous as to empty God’s reservoir of punishment:

Wonder no longer why no Curse, like these,  
Was known, or suffer’d in the Primitive days:  
They never sinn’d enough to merit it,  
'Twas therefore what Heav'ns just powr thought fit,
To scourge this latter, and more sinful age
With all the dregs, and squeeings of his Rage.
(20-25)

In the climax of these early lines, Oldham reaches back to
the beginning of human existence, to the only being capable
of a curse on mankind greater than the Jesuits'. Spain is
"amply reveng'd" for the losses she has suffered from
England--the armada, "all the Ills, our warlike Virgin
wrought, / Or Drake, and Rawleigh her great Scourges
brought"--by virtue of having produced the Jesuits:

Amply was she reveng'd in that one birth,
When Hell for her the Biscaim Plague brought
forth;
Great Counter-Plague! in which unhappy we
Pay back her suff'ring with full usury:
Than whom alone none ever was design'd
T' entail a wider curse on Human kind,
But he, who first begot us, and first sin'd.
(30-36)

Worth note is the usual connection between the Jesuits
and Hell, which in this poem, as in "Garnet's Ghost," is
a major thematic thread, closely woven with the vastness
of Jesuit evil. We will recall that Garnet's ambition to
surpass Hell implied that the limits of the Jesuits' vice
stretch even wider than Satan's. Similarly, in Satyr II
there are several passages in which Hell is pictured as a
lesser evil than the Jesuits. Reaching halfway around
the globe to the New World, Oldham illustrates the vastness
of the Jesuits' depravity in their treatment of the Indians
of Mexico. Accusing them of being interested primarily in
the riches of the New World ("It griev'd [holy mother Church]
to see such goodly Nations hold / Bad Errors and unpardon-
able Gold"), Oldham then exposes their methods of convert-
ing the natives:

. . . whole Myriads stood
At Font, and were baptis'd in their own blood.
Millions of Souls were hurl'd from hence to burn
Before their time, be damn'd before their turn.
(75-78)

He now declares these Indians fortunate compared to those
left with the Jesuits, and then ends the passage with a
reiteration of the plague motif:

Yet these were in compassion sent to Hell,
The rest reserv'd in spite, and worse to feel.
Compell'd instead of Fiends to worship you,
The more inhumane Devils of the two.
Rare way, and method of Conversion this,
To make your Votaries your Sacrifice!
If to destroy be Reformation thought,
A Plague as well might the good work have wrought.
(79-85)

Later in the poem Oldham, denouncing the Jesuits' alleged practice of refusing to admit perjury even at the
moment of execution ("O glorious, and heroick Constancy! /
That can forswear upon the Cart, and die / With gasping
Souls expiring in a lye"), and jeering at their claims to
martyrdom, asks:
Is Heav'n for such, whose Deeds make Hell too good,
Too mild a Penance for their cursed Brood?
For Whose unheard-of Crimes, and damned Sake
Fate must below new sorts of Torture make,
Since, when of old it fram'd that place of Doom,
'Twas thought no guilt, like this could thither come.

(225-230)

This claim that Hell's capacity to punish cannot equal the Jesuits' to sin is repeated at the end of the poem. Oldham mentions the most notorious of earlier Jesuits, thereby linking the contemporary aims of the Society with those of preceding generations, then concludes with the observation that the devils of hell are guilty of less than the Jesuits:

Go, where all your black Tribe before are gone,
Follow Chastel, Ravillac, Clement down,
Your Catesby, Faux, and Garnet, thousands more,
And those who hence have lately rais'd the Score,
Where the Grand Traitor now, and all the Crew,
Of his Disciples must receive their Due:
Where Flames, and Tortures of Eternal Date
Must punish you, yet ne're can expiate:
Learn duller Feinds [sic] your unknown Cruelties,
Such as no Wit, but yours, could e're devise,
No Guilt, but yours, deserve; make Hell confess
It self out-done, its Devils damn'd for less.

(274-285)49

But if the Jesuits are essentially and inextricably linked with the hellish legions, it is a relationship made at once subtler and more odious by their continuous avowals of pious devotion to heavenly ideals.50 A good example is the passage about their ruthless exploitation of the people and riches of the New World, cited on page 66 above. Simply stated, the Jesuits are guilty of an insidious hypocrisy
made the more fearsome by the immensity of their evil. For Oldham, this hypocrisy is imaged most vividly in the hands, whose disposition in a certain way (folded, uplifted to heaven) so easily suggests pious prayer, but which may also be the instruments of death. Commenting on the Jesuits' love of killing for itself, i.e., not motivated by strong emotions, Oldham says ironically:

Give me your through-pac'd Rogue, who scorns to be
Prompted by poor Revenge, or Injury,
But does it of true inbred cruelty:
Your cool, and sober Murderer, who prays,
And stabs at the same time, who one hand has
Stretch'd up to Heav'n, t'other to make the Pass.
(94-100)

He then hammers the point home with a simile which, presumably, would not find quite as general acceptance with his readers as would denunciation of the Jesuits, but would nevertheless be applauded at a time when England, only twenty years since reunited with her King, could still shudder at the thought of regicide:

So the late Saints of blessed memory,
Cut throats in Godly pure sincerity:
So they with lifted hands, and eyes devout,
Said Grace, and carv'd a slaughter'd Monarch out.
(101-104)

In a sense, this kind of hypocrisy is another manifestation of the spatial conception of Jesuit evil we saw in "Garnet's Ghost." On earth stands the Jesuit, performing his wicked
deeds, bonded forever with hell below, but always looking
piously upward as though obeying divine mandates. Oldham
develops this conception throughout *Satyr II*. With the
Jesuits, he says,

> . . . the boldest flights of wickedness
  Are stampt Religion, and for currant pass.
  The blackest, ugliest, horrid'est, damned'est deed,
  For which Hell flames, the Schools a Title need,
  If done for Holy Church; is sanctified.

(116-120)

"Heav'n shall be / Itself," he goes on, "invok'd t'abet th' impiety": "Dare something worthy Newgate, and the
Tow'r, / If you'll be canonized, and Heav'n ensure." Continuing the play on sainthood, Oldham decides that "Rebellion,
Treason, Murder, Massacre, / The chief Ingredients now of
Saint-ship are, / And Tyburn only stocks the Calendar" (148-
150). He concludes the passage thus:

Unhappy Judas, whose ill fate, or chance
Threw him upon gross times of ignorance;
Who knew not how to value, or esteem
The worth, and merit of a glorious crime!
Should his kind Stars have let him acted now,
H'ad dy'd absolv'd, and dy'd a Martyr too.

(151-156)

If Judas would have made a good Jesuit, as attested by
his unsurpassable treachery,51 Cain did not have a vision of
evil sufficient to qualify for membership in the Society:

When the first Traitor Cain (too good to be
Thought Patron of this Black Fraternity)
His bloody Tragedy of old design'd,  
One death alone quench'd his revengeful mind,  
Content with but a quarter of Mankind:  
Had he been Jesuit, had he but put on  
Their savage cruelty; the rest had gone:  
His hand had sent old Adam after too,  
And forc'd the Godhead to create anew.  

Thus does Oldham reach back once more to the beginning of humanity for a means of illuminating the enormity of Jesuit evil. Only two men, we have seen, can compare with them in harm done mankind: Adam, who "first begot us, and first sin'd," thereby placing a curse on all men in all ages; and Judas Iscariot, who in Loyola's words, "scorn'd to stoop at Sin beneath a God."

"Oldham," wrote Thomas Brown, "seems, as it were, pre-destinated to the service of the muses, and the ridiculing that class of men, who, of all persons, least deserve to draw the appellation of their order from the sacred name of Jesus." Oldham's treatment of the Jesuits in the two satires I have been discussing seems to be something other than ridicule--denunciation, exposition of their unlimited evil perhaps, but in a tone more alarmed than scornful. In the last two Satyrs, however, "ridicule" comes close to an accurate description of his aims. To be sure, the denunciation and exposition are still there, and in some measure reiterate the cosmic evil of "Garnet's Ghost" and Satyr II. But in "Loyola's Will" and especially in "St. Ignatius's Image,"
Oldham seems as equally concerned to lay open the foolishness and ridiculousness of Jesuit and Catholic beliefs as to explore their potentially disastrous consequences. The very settings of the four satires reflect this differing approach. In the first one, we find Garnet in secret conclave with the murderers of Godfrey, their daggers still bloody, praising them for the deed and urging them to terrible new endeavors. The presence of Godfrey's murderers alone would be sufficient to prevent any really scoffing tone—it was an event still far too fresh in the national memory—and Garnet's ambition to turn England into a tomb is too appalling, even in satire, to be a laughing matter. Similarly, in Satyr II the Jesuits are treated as a national menace to be met with all seriousness, as attested by Oldham's suggestion:

Or let that wholsome Statute be reviv'd  
Which England heretofore from Wolves reliev'd:  
Tax every Shire instead of them to bring  
Each Year a certain tale of Jesuits in:  
And let their mangled Quarters hang the Ile  
To scare all future Vermin from the Soil.  
(258-261)

But in "Loyola's Will," a lecherous old man lies dying, proudly relating the details of his disgusting past while sententiously urging his successors to behave like him; and the tone of "St. Ignatius's Image," the least powerful but also the most embarrassing of the four to the Jesuits, is
clearly reflected by the subtitle: "St. Ignatius his Image brought in, discovering the Rogueries of the Jesuits, and ridiculous Superstition of the Church of Rome." It is as though Oldham's plan was to get on the record a recognition of the sweep of Jesuit aims and the necessity of preventing their attainment, then to clinch his argument by showing the ludicrous notions they subscribed to, but always with a suggestion of sinister purpose. He attacks the Jesuits on two satiric levels, and the Society seems susceptible to both.

Loyola, "Grown ripe for Hell, and Roman Calendar," does have occasional flashes of the evil vision which characterized Garnet, and it is this vision which he seems trying to instill in his listeners:

You, by whose happy Influence Rome can boast
A greater Empire, than by Luther lost:
By whom wide Nature's far-stretch'd Limits now,
And utmost Indies to its Crosier Bow.

(40-43)

His strongest expression of the vision comes early in the poem, presumably before he grows weak from the exertion of his long speech:

Restless your Aims pursue: let no defeat
Your sprightly Courage, and Attempts rebate,
But urge to fresh, and bolder, ne're to end
Till the whole World to our great Caliph bend;
Till he thro' every Nation every where
Bear sway, and Reign as absolute, as here:
Till Rome without controul, and Contest be
The Universal Ghostly Monarchy.

(58-65)
This is a statement worthy of Garnet in its cosmic ambition, but Loyola is able to equal its scope only once more, in his admiring praise of Judas Iscariot (lines 274-284, quoted on page 27 above). He does, however, approach it in a few other instances. Much of the early part of the poem is given to Loyola's exhortations to strict obedience to the pope regardless of both his character and his actions:

Again, if he Ordain 't, in his Decrees,
Let very Gospel for meer Fable pass:
Let Right be wrong, Black White, and Vertue Vice,
No Sun, no Moon, nor no Antipodes:
Forswear your Reason, Conscience, & your Creed,
Your very Sense, and Euclid, if he bid.

(122-127)

"Let it be held less heinous," Loyola continues, "less amiss, / To break all Gods Commands, than one of his." And the conclusion of his injunctions is a climax reminiscent in its vast conception of those in "Garnet's Ghost":

If he but nod Commissions out to kill,
But becken Lives of Hereticks to spill;
Let th' Inquisition rage, fresh Cruelties
Make the dire Engines groan with tortur'd Cries:
Let Campo Flori every day be strow'd
With the warm Ashes of the Luth'ran Brood:
Repeat again Bohemian Slaughters ore,
And Piedmont Vallies drown with floating Gore:
Swifter than Murdering Angels, when they fly
On errands of avenging Destiny.
Fiercer than Storms let loose, with eager haste
Lay Cities, Countries, Realms, whole Nature waste.
Sack, Ravish, burn, destroy, slay, massacre,
Till the same Grave their Lives, and Names interr.

(143-156)
But aside from these few exceptions, Loyola limits his legacy to advice on more routine matters, such as whom the Jesuits should admit to their fraternity. Born Catholics who have demonstrated their zeal should, of course, be assigned positions of power, but this seems the only qualification:

Exclude not those of less desert, decree
To all Revolters your Foundation free:
To all, whom Gaming, Drunkenness, or Lust,
To Need, and Popery shall have reduc'd:
To all, whom slighted Love, Ambition crost,
Hopes often bulk't, and Sought Preferment lost,
Whom Pride, or Discontent, Revenge, or Spite,
Fear, Frenzy, or Despair shall Proselyte:
Those Pow'rful Motives, which the most bring in,
Most Converts to our Church, and Order win.
(180-189)

"No Varlet, Rogue, or Miscreant refuse," he continues, "From Gallies, Jails, or Hell it self broke loose." Loyola then gives his followers, Polonius-like, extensive advice on how to be a successful Jesuit. First, one must "Get that great Gift, and Talent, Impudence," which "alone prefers, alone makes great, / Confers alone Wealth, Titles, and Estate." As for religion, "Think it enough the empty Form to have: / The outward Show is seemly, cheap, and light, / The Substance Cumbersome, of Cost, and Weight." Nor must a true Jesuit be bound by those "strict Rules" under which other orders live: "To Capuchins, Carthusians, Cordeliers / Leave Penance, meager abstinence, and Prayers." On the contrary, he must enjoy the terrestrial pleasures to the fullest: "Live you in Luxury, and pamper'd Ease, / As if whole Nature
were your Cateress."\textsuperscript{54}

Loyola next gives instructions "What Wiles, and Cheats the Rabble best deceive," practical hints for mystifying the common folk; for example, "Tell how blest Virgin to come down was seen, / Like Play-House punk descending in Machine." Unfortunately, the spread of "Contagious Knowledge" has complicated the task of hoodwinking the masses, and the Jesuits must therefore "be wary" how they "feign such things," taking care to claim miracles and the like only in distant and remote places like "Mexico, Brazil, Peru," where "they may currant, and unquesti\'d pass: / Where never poaching Heretics resort, / To spring the Lye, and make\'t their Game, and Sport."

Turning fondly to "Confession, our chief Priviledg, and Boast," Loyola explains how it can be used for both power and pleasure:

\texttt{\small 'Tis this, that spies through Court-intrigues, and brings Admission to the Cabinets of Kings: By this we keep proud Monarchs at our Becks, And make our Foot-Stools of their Thrones & Necks. (355-358)}

Political power may be complemented by riches if a monetary penance is assessed: "By this w\' unlock the Miser\'s hoarded Chests, / And Treasure, though kept close, as States-mens Breasts." Then the "old Lecher" describes in detail how his "younger Vot\'ries" may use confession as a means to "Riot in
free, and uncontroll'd delight, / Where no dull Marriage
clogs the Appetite," when the "unguarded Maid" comes to
confess her sins. There will be no difficulty if "she has
practis'd in the Trade before," but there are also methods
of seducing the maid who is "untaught" and "Rude, and un-
knowing in the mystery." Loyola’s careful explanation of
these methods demonstrates clearly the different tack Old-
ham is taking in this Satyr from his approach in the first
two, the founder of the eminently evil Society now presented
as a disgusting old man taking obvious pleasure in recalling
the physical pleasures of his priesthood:

Sometimes as if you’d blame her gaudy dress,
Her Naked Pride, her Jewels, Point, and Lace;
Find opportunity her Breasts to press:
Oft feel her hand, and whisper in her ear,
You find the secret marks of lewdness there:
Sometimes with naughty sence her blushes raise,
And make 'em guilt, she never knew, confess;
'Thus (may you say) with such a leering smile,
'So Languishing a look you hearts beguile:
'Thus with your foot, hand, eye, you tokens speak,
'These Signs deny, these Assignations make:
'Thus 'tis you clip, with such a fierce embrace
'You clasp your Lover to your Breast, and Face:
'Thus are your hungry lips with Kisses cloy'd,
'Thus is your hand, & thus your tongue employ'd.'

(407-421)

A wave of nostalgia for the good old days strikes Loyola at
the recollection of all this carnal gratification:

This heretofore, when youth, and sprightly Blood
Ran in my Veins, I tasted, and enjoy'd:
Ah those blest days!—(here the old Lecher smil'd
With sweet remembrance of past pleasures fill'd)
But they are gone! Wishes alone remain,
And Dreams of Joy, ne're to be felt again:
To abler Youth I now the Practice leave,
To whom this Counsel, and Advice I give.

(435-442)

Realizing that he has dwelt too long on matters incidental although pleasant ("But the dear mention of my gayer days / Has made me farther, than I would, digress"), Loyola returns to his discussion of the proper kind of penance to levy: "Enjoyn no sow'r repentance, Tear, and Grief; / Eyes weep no cash, and you no profit give" sets the keynote, and full illustrations of it complete the passage, for instance:

Bid Strumpets persevere, absolve 'em too,
And take their dues in kind for what you do:
Exhort the painful, and industrious Bawd
To Diligence, and Labour in her Trade:
Nor think her innocent Vocation ill,
Whose incomes do's the sacred Treasure fill.

(478-483)

Loyola concludes the passage with a warning to keep the Bible out of the reach of "lay-Fools," because it would "impeach" the Jesuits' "Cheats, and Artifices." Mention of the Bible leads him to reiterate his earlier complaint that education is becoming too widespread: "Happy the time, when th' un-pretending Crowd / No more, than I, its [the Bible's] Language understood!" Ignorance of the Bible had permitted papal domination, but

. . . since the broaching that mischievous Piece,
Each Alderman a Father Lumbard is:
And every Cit dares impudently know
More than a Council, Pope, and Conclave too.
Hence the late Damned Friar, and all the crew
Of former Crawling Sects their poison drew;
Hence all the Troubles, Plagues, Rebellions breed,
We've felt, or feel, or may hereafter dread.

(511-518)

As his life draws near its close, Loyola turns to "more important" affairs, namely "How Kingdoms are embroil'd" and "How the first seeds of Discontent are sown / To spring up in Rebellion." His advice here consists mainly in emphasizing the necessity of finding "some dext'rous Rogue" to assassinate heretical princes, of being well-versed in the "sundry ways to kill" ("No flight of Murder of the subt'lest shape, / Your busie search, and observation scape"), of never admitting guilt when caught, and of the immediate liquidation of any Jesuit suspected of treachery to the order. Finally, in a last outburst of strength, Loyola seems once again to have regained a measure of Jesuitical vastness of purpose:

Swear you (and let the Fates confirm the same)
An endless Hatred to the Luth'ran Name:
Vow never to admit, or League, or Peace,
Or truce, or Commerse with the Cursed Race:
Now, through all Age, when Time, or Place soe're
Shall give you pow'r, wage an immortal War;
Like Theban Feuds, let yours your selves survive,
And in your very Dust, and Ashes live.
Like mine, be your last Gasp their Curse.

(660-668)

Loyola barely manages to "faulter out his Blessing on the Crowd," when "Amen is echo'd by Infernal Howl, / And scrambling Spirits seize his parting Soul."
Oldham's technique in "Loyola's Will" of attacking the Jesuits through the routine details of their "conduct book" is in a way analogous to his technique in "Garnet's Ghost." In both cases he lets Garnet and Loyola unfold their own evil natures; the difference is in thematic elaboration rather than in artistic point of view. "St. Ignatius's Image" bears a similar correspondence with Satyr II, which is a direct expression of the satirist. The peculiar and complex point of view of "St. Ignatius's Image" enables Oldham to couch his satire in the most extreme terms without loss of decorum. A statue of Loyola is the speaker, ridiculing in the most disrespectful possible manner the "Superstition of the Church of Rome"; at best, the statue is an unwilling fixture in a Catholic church, and it takes a jaundiced view of all the ceremonies and rituals performed in the church. The great irony is that it represents Loyola and at the same time mercilessly ridicules all the things that Loyola presumably held sacred. Furthermore, the very fact of its representing Loyola in effect suggests an incontrovertible authority for its revelations.

The statue makes clear both its unwillingness to participate in Roman superstition and its characteristic earthiness of expression at the very beginning:
Once I was common Wood, a shapeless Log,
Thrown out a Pissing-post for ev'ry Dog:
The Workman yet in doubt, what course to take,
Whether I'd best a Saint, or Hog-trough make,
After debate resolv'd me for a Saint,
And thus fam'd Loyola I represent:
And well I may resemble him, for he
As stupid was, as much a Block as I.

But after these opening lines, the point of view is further complicated by the statue's subtle fusion of its own identity with Loyola's, and it begins speaking of the Jesuit's life in the first person: "These Pictures, which you see, my Story gives, / The Acts, and Monuments of me alive." As a result, there is an unconscious tendency to assume that Loyola himself is at least partially the iconoclast—the ultimate hypocrisy. This fallacious, but unconscious, impression is strengthened by such passages as the following, particularly if the lecher of "Loyola's Will" is still fresh in the memory:

What Peter's shadow did of old, the same
Is fancied done by my all-powerful Name;
For which some wear't about their Necks, and Arms,
To guard from Dangers, Sicknesses, and Harms:
And some on Wombs the barren to relieve,
A Miracle, I better did alive.

The statue goes on to tell how the Jesuits make it seem to perspire, to move, and the like; then jeers at the rich offerings made before it; then attacks in earnest the main objects of its ridicule, the sacraments and sacramentals
of the Catholic church. Holy water is the first: "The Pope's Elixir, Holy Waters here, / Which they with Chymick Art distill'd prepare: / Choice above Goddard's Drops, and all the Trash of Modern Quacks" (98-101). Then the statue turns to the holy oils used in Confirmation and Extreme Uction:

This make the Chrism, which mix'd with Snot of Priests,  
Anoint young Cath'licks for the Church's lists;  
And when they're crost, confest, and die; by this  
Their lanching Souls slide off to endless Bliss:  
As Lapland Saints, when they on Broomsticks fly,  
By help of Magick Unctions mount the Sky.  
(112-117)

The beneficial powers thought to have been attributed by Catholics to "Shrines, Crosses, Medals, Shells, and Waxen Lambs" are satirized in the same tone—which, it will become evident, is typical of this Satyr to a far greater extent than any of the others:

Of wondrous Virtue all (you must believe)  
And from all sorts of Ill preservative;  
From Plague, Infection, Thunder, Storm, and Hail,  
Love, Grief, Want, Debt, Sin, and the Devil and all.  
(128-131)

The "Reliques" on sale in the church are shown in great detail to be bogus (e.g., "Hair from the Skulls of dying Strumpets shorn, / And Felons Bones from rifled Gibbets torn"). Similarly, the esoteric bits of knowledge
claimed by the Jesuits are exposed as ludicrous: one of them "undertakes by Scale of Miles to tell / The Bounds, Dimensions, and Extent of Hell," and "with as much exactness states the case, / As if h'ad been Surveyor of the place." Another "frights the Rout with ruful Stories, / of Wild Chimaera's, Limbo's, Purgatories." Another "Cries up the vertue of Indulgences, / And all the rates of Vices does assess." But of all Catholic beliefs, the one most contemptible to the statue, and also the one whose treatment at Oldham's hands was most certain to outrage his Catholic readers, is the Consecration—the central rite of the Mass, whereby, according to Catholic doctrine, bread and wine are changed by the priest into the body and blood of Christ:

But nothing with the Crowd does more enhance The value of these holy Charlatans, Than when the wonders of the Mass they view, Where spiritual Jugglers their chief Mast'ry shew: Hey Jingo, Sirs! What's this? 'tis Bread you see; Presto be gone! 'tis now a Deity. Two grains of Dough, with Cross, and stamp of Priest, And five small words pronounc'd, make up their Christ. To this they all fall down, this all adore, And strait devour, what they ador'd before; Down goes the tiny Saviour at a bit, To be digested, and at length beshit: From Altar to Close-Stool, or Jakes preferr'd, First Wafer, then a God, and then a ______. (259-272)

The statue's monologue is climaxed by a passage whose
technique is by now familiar:

Should I tell all their countless Knaveeries,
Their Cheats, and Shams, and Forgeries, and Lies,
Their Cringings, Crossings, Censings, Sprinklings,
Chrisms,
Their Conjurings, and Spells, and Exorcisms;
Their Motly Habits, Maniples, and Stoles,
Albs, Ammits, Rochets, Chimers, Hoods, and Cowls;
Should I tell all their several Services,
Their Trentals, Masses, Dirges, Rosaries;
Their solemn Pomp, their Pageants, and Parades,
Their holy Masks, and spiritual cavalcades,
With thousand Antick Tricks, and Gambols more;
'Twould swell the sum to . . . a mighty score [..]
(300-311)

This detailed listing, in an apparent effort to encompass all possible accoutrements of the Roman church, is essentially the same device Oldham uses in "Garnet's Ghost" to such advantage, differing from it in thematic implications rather than in imaginary mode. In keeping with his more mundane frame of reference in the last two satires, Oldham has the statue focus on the day-to-day ceremonies and trappings of the church, whereas in the first two, he concentrates on the grand design of total domination (sometimes involving total destruction) envisioned by the Jesuits. But he is still talking, in this passage, about a large number of things "swelling the sum" (line 311), almost precisely the same image Garnet used in enunciating his ambition of England as a great tomb: "Till such vast numbers swell the countless summ, / That the wide Grave, and wider Hell want room."
This imagistic consistency seems indicative of what Oldham wanted to convey by his persistent use of such devices as the detailed listing illustrated above—what Weldon Williams aptly calls his "characteristic expansion." The vastness of the Jesuits' evil is matched, as it were, by the vastness of their folly, and Oldham appears to have honored his vow to make his "severe and exemplary doom / Spread wider than their Guilt."
Notes

1 In the Advertisement to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, Oldham says that "What he calls the Prologue, is in imitation of Persius, who has prefix'd somewhat by that Name before his Book of Satyrs, and may serve for a pretty good Authority."


3 Ibid., p. 260.


7 Ibid., pp. 3-4.


9 Ibid., XI, 625.

10 "The Muse of Satire," YR, XLI (1951), 82-83.

11 The Cankered Muse, p. 4.


15 The Cankered Muse, pp. 55-63.

16 Ibid., p. 57.


19 Ibid., p. 75.

20 Satyr I, line 30. For a discussion of these Elizabethan satirists and Juvenal's importance for them, see Kernan, The Cankered Muse, chapters 2 and 3.

21 See, for example, the commemorative poems by Andrews and Gould, discussed in my Conclusion, pp. 169 and 171 below.


... all Kings, Queenes, and Monarches of the Christian world, are by this Popish Maxime and Jesuiticall ground, brought into the bondage and slavery of the Bishop of Rome, and must be his slaves and underlings to doe what pleaseth him... [and] all the Papists in England which joyne with the Jesuites,
(who are verie many,) doe obstinately embrace this Jesuiticall doctrine, and so are guilty of high treason.

24 p. 13. Cp. A Discourse to the Lords of the Parliament as touching the murther committed upon Henrie the great (London, 1611), p. 7:

When that devillish and damnable Gunpowder devise of England resteth so fresh in your memories, so bleeding new, wherein it was purposed that the King, Queen, Prince, the whole Nobilitie of the Land, the whole Clergie, Archbishops, Bishops, and others, the chiefe and choice of the Commons, infinite numbers of all sorts and qualities . . . should equally without care had, or respect made, been miserably and monstrously (by blowing up the house wherein they were contained) murthered and massacred.


26 p. 23. Cp. both A Discourse to the Lords of the Parliament and The Copie of a Late Decree of the Sorbone at Paris, for the condemning of that Impious and Haeeretical opinion, touching the Murthering of Princes (London, 1610), which make similar charges.

27 p. 26. Cp. The Anatomie of Popish Tyrannie, p. 29: "Another thing . . . to be generally misliked in the Jesuites . . . is their equivocating, by which you may tearme in plaine English, lying and coggling." See Macbeth, II, iii, 8-11: "Faith here's an Equivocator, that could swear in both the Scales against eyther Scale, who committed Treason enough for Gods sake, yet could not equivocate to Heaven."

29 I have taken this information from Ogg, pp. 564-565.

30 Ogg, pp. 582-584.

31 Ogg, p. 581.

32 Pollock, however, concludes that there was a real basis for fear of a Plot and shows a web of intrigue constructed mainly by the Jesuits.

33 C. V. Wedgwood suggests a comparison between the Satyrs upon the Jesuits and Fletcher's poem, which treats "exactly the same subject," i.e., the "destruction of English Protestantism" (Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts [Cambridge, Eng., 1950], p. 154). Wedgwood slightly mistakes the scene of the first Satyr as a "session of their [the Jesuits'] dead in Hell."


35 Compare Oldham's "Upon the Author of a Play call'd Sodom," lines 24-27:

Like Ulcers, thy impostum'd Addle Brains,  
Drop out in Matter, which thy Paper stains:  
Whence nauseous Rhymes, by filthy Births  
proceed;  
As Maggots, in some t-rd, ingendring breed.

36 Ignatius His Conclave or His Inthronisation in a Late Election in Hell, ed. Charles M. Coffin (The Facsimile Text Society, New York, 1941), pp. 32-33.

37 Ibid., p. 40.

38 Ibid., pp. 33-34.

39 Although Ignatius His Conclave has a "frame"--the narrator has seen the hellish events in an "extasie"--
it is not artistically integrated with the body of the work. Marjorie Nicolson's plausible explanation of this disjunctive structure is that Donne, after completing the unframed narrative, read Kepler's Somnium and realized the artistic value of the "dream vision," but pressed for time and unable to revise the narrative itself, he merely bracketed it with the "extasie" frame ("Kepler, the Somnium, and John Donne," in Science and Imagination [Ithaca, N. Y., 1956], pp. 72-73; reprinted from JHI, I [1940], 259-286).

40 Coffin, p. 90.

41 Weldon M. Williams has described thoroughly the specific influence of Jonson's play on Oldham's Satyrs upon the Jesuits in his essay "The Influence of Ben Jonson's Catiline upon John Oldham's Satyrs upon the Jesuits," ELH, XI (1944), 38-62. Williams believes the influence to be considerably broader than Oldham acknowledged in his Advertisement, extending in fact to all four of the Satyrs rather than only "Garnet's Ghost," and stemming not only from the "Sylla's Ghost" scene but from the entire play. Some of the "parallels" with which Williams attempts to prove his contention are questionable, but for the most part his thesis is sound.


44 Ibid., p. 130.


47 In Paradise Lost, for example, when Eve yields to Satan's temptations and eats the forbidden fruit, "Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat / Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe, / That all was lost" (IX, 782-784); and when Adam also eats, "Nature gave a second
groan, / Sky low'r'd, and muttering Thunder, some sad
drops / Wept at completing of the mortal Sin / Original"   (IX, 1001-1004).

48 Cf. my analysis of the "Cosmelia" poems, Chapter IV, pages 134-146 below.

49 The main idea of these two passages recalls a
similar one in Fletcher's The Apollyonists (see page 42
above), and so too does the conception of the Jesuits
as a plague.

50 Cp. The Hellish and Horrible Councell, which relates
how the Jesuits ask heavenly assistance for the murderer
they have chosen to kill a king:

And thou, O great and powerfull God, that
hast revealed unto him, in his prayer and
Meditation that he must (of necessity) be
the murtherer of a Tyrant and Heretique,
to give his crowne to a Catholique King, and
he being (by us) made apt and disposed unto
this murder. ..

The Jesuits then assure the assassin of immediate admission
to heaven.

51 Cf. Satyr III, "Loyola's Will," lines 279-284,
quoted on page 27 above; and Satyr IV, lines 171-172:
"Here may you the grand Traitor's Halter see, / Some
call 't the Arms of the Society."

52 "A Short Essay on English Satire," in The Works
of Mr. Thomas Brown, ed. James Drake, 8th edition (Dublin,
1778).

53 See lines 91-100, quoted on pages 34-35 above.

54 Cp. The Anatomie of Popish Tyrannie, p. 9:

      it appeareth evidently, that the
Jesuits seek for nothing else, but honour,
preferment, ease, delicate faire, sumptuous
apparrell, horses, coaches, and their owne sensuall pleasures.

55 Adapted from Horace's Eighth Satire of the First Book, "Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum, etc." Translated by Fairclough:

Once I was a fig-wood stem, a worthless log, when the carpenter, doubtful whether to make a stool or a Priapus, chose that I be a god. A god, then, I became, of thieves and birds the special terror, etc. (H. R. Fairclough tr., Horace: Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica [London, 1928], p. 97)

Oldham says in his Advertisement to the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, "Whence he had the hint of the fourth, is obvious to all, that are any thing acquainted with Horace. And without the Authority of so great a President, the making of an Image speak, is but an ordinary Miracle in Poetry." Cp. Isaiah, Chapter 44, verses 10 ff.

56 Cp. The Iesuites Gospel, by William Crashawe (London, 1610), pp. 18-19:

Amongst the late devices that Romishe policye hath forged to upholde their hierarchye, a principall is, their Art of Miracles, which they pretende to have so ordinarye, that in many churches they have more miracles than sermons: but alas daily experience sheweth us that they be lyinge Wonders, and no true Miracles. Now because such tricks are most effectuall to delude the common people, and that they finde themselves and their cause to have lost much of late in many parts of Christendom; therefore to recover themselves and to gaine credit to their forlorn cause, they have most busily applyed their point of late, and have by the crafts of Machiavelian Jesuits . . . so farre prevailed, that there scarce passeth a month wherein some new Image of our Lady is not found, or some strange miracle and wonders heard of.
Chapter III

Odes

Whatever ancient Worthies boast,
Which made themselves and Poets their Describers great,
From whence old Zeal did Gods and Shrines create;
Thou hadst thy self alone engrost,
And all their scatter'd Glories in thy Soul did meet.
("To the Memory of Mr. Harman Atwood," lines 139-142)

Oldham's slight reputation today rests almost wholly on
the Satyrs upon the Jesuits; yet of the six hundred twenty-four pages in the 1686 edition, the Satyrs account for only ninety-two. The remainder represents a wide variety of poetic genres--miscellaneous satires, imitations, paraphrases, translations, and odes. Many of these poems, it is true, while interesting as the work of a poet highly regarded by his contemporaries but largely ignored by current scholars, demand no very extensive comment. It is my opinion, however, that had Oldham enjoyed the benefit of a definitive modern edition, his popularity would be considerably greater than it is. Such poems, for example, as "Upon a Lady, who by overturning of a Coach had her Coats behind flung up, and what was undershewn to the view of the Company" (which not surprisingly offended the sensibilities of Bell, the nineteenth-century editor) and "The Drunkards Speech in a Mask" are, I
think, clever and witty enough to appeal to modern readers. Be that as it may, it is the neglect of the odes that is most unfortunate.¹

I

The uncertain position of the ode in the Restoration, compared with the attention given it in the earlier part of the century, has been commented on by George Shuster in this manner:

Quite naturally the poetic instrument of the Ode, as designed by such writers as Milton, Cowley, and Crashaw, could be made to serve the uses of realistic and rationalistic poets only with extreme difficulty... an increasing number of poets now used the Pindarick as a vehicle for satire or bombastic eulogy. Yet there were also those who continued to look upon it as a vehicle for impassioned, even religious feeling.²

Oldham exemplifies both tendencies, although the former in only one significant poem, the "Satyr against Vertue" (the table of contents in the 1686 edition adds, "Pindarique Ode"), which immediately follows the Satyrs upon the Jesuits. This is a satire in which the persona stands out clearly distinct from the satirist, virtue being cursed and vice praised throughout. It is, as Dale Underwood says, a "verse attack upon the libertine,"³ although his further remark that
it is "so hysterically exaggerated in its satiric inversion of tone that it is at times nearly incoherent"⁴ is itself exaggerated. The "Satyr against Vertue" was probably one of Oldham's earliest satires,⁵ and its dominant technique is quite similar to that of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, as analysis will show.

The direct satiric inversion is evident from the opening lines:

Now Curses on you all! ye vertuous Fools,
Who think to fetter free-born Souls,
And tie 'em to dull Morality, and rules.

The "all" of line one is elaborated by specific examples:
"The Sagarite [Stagyrite] be damn'd, and all the Crew / Of learned Ideots, who his steps pursue." Aristotle and his disciples, however, are not so odious as the man who, at some remote time, first set up laws and religion, thereby depriving man of the freedom he had enjoyed. This sentiment is enunciated in a passage reminiscent in flavor of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits:

But damn'd, and more (if Hell can do't), be that thrice cursed name,
Who e're the Rudiments of Law design'd;
Who e're did the first Model of Religion frame,
And by that double Vassalage enthrall'd Mankind,
By nought before, but their own Pow'r, or Will confin'd:
Now quite abridg'd of all their Primitive Liberty,
And slaves to each capricious Monarch's Tyranny.

(13-19)
The speaker soon makes clear that, as we should expect, the kind of "Liberty" whose loss he is deploring is mainly sensual; virtue becomes associated with spirits in heaven, vice with people still alive. The contrast between virtue and vice, spirit and body, heaven and earth, which is evident from the following passage, will continue throughout the poem. The speaker addresses virtue:

Go follow that nice Goddess to the Skies,
Who heretofore disgusted at increasing Vice,
Dislik'd the World, and thought it too profane,
And timely hence retir'd, and kindly ne're return'd again.
Hence to those Airy Mansions rove,
Converse with Saints, and holy folks above;
Thou'rt now an hard, unpracticable good,
Too difficult for flesh and blood:
Were I all soul, like them, perhaps I'd learn
to practise thee.

(42-54)

In contrast to those "holy folks above" are "all the Men of Wit, and Sense," who "abhor" virtue. If virtue ever finds favor with people still living, it is either those "by ignorance misled" or those incapacitated by old age, the former because they know no better, the latter because they have no choice. Oldham develops the idea of virtue as one of the diseases of old age:

If ever unkind destiny
Shall force long life on me;
If e're I must the curse of dotage bear;
Perhaps I'll dedicate those dregs of Time to her,
And come with Crutches her most humble Votary.
When sprightly Vice retreats from hence,
And quits the ruins of decayed sense;
She'll serve to usher in a fair pretence,
And varnish with her name a well-dissembled impotence.
When Ptisick, Rheums, Catarrhs, and Palsies seize,
And all the Bill of Maladies,
Which Heaven to punish over-living Mortals sends;
Then let her enter with the numerous infirmities,
Her self the greatest plague, which wrinkles, and grey hairs attends.

(124-137)

But despite this rather severe treatment of virtue, it is not until the middle of the poem that Oldham begins building to the kind of cosmic sweep that we have seen in the Satyrs upon the Jesuits. He has earlier identified virtue with heavenly spirits, and he now capitalizes on this correspondence by a sudden reversal. "Vice well-improv'd yields bliss, and fame beside, / And some for sinning have been deifi'd," he says, thereby raising well-accomplished vice to a higher level (godhood) than he had previously assigned virtue (sainthood). His example is no less than Jove himself:

Thus the lewd Gods of old did move,
By these brave methods to the seats above.
Ev'n Jove himself, the Sovereign Deity,
Father and King of all th' immortal Progeny,
Ascended to that high Degree;
By crimes above the reach of weak Mortality.
He Heav'n one large Seraglio made,
Each Goddess turn'd a glorious Punk o'
th' trade;
And all that Sacred place
Was fill'd with Bastard-Gods of his own race:
Almighty Lech'ry got his first repute,
And everlasting Whoring was his chiepest attribute.

(177-188)

This is a significant passage in several respects. In the first place, by admiration of the pagan god Jove, Oldham is implicitly placing vice in open opposition to Christian principles. Earlier in the poem, he has said that only in "the Worlds rude untaught infancy . . .
before it had arriv'd at sense" could Virtue have been "Worshiped" by "Humane kind"; only, that is,

. . . in those antient goodly duller times,
When crafty Pagans had engross'd all crimes:
When Christian Fools were obstinately good,
Nor yet their Gospel-freedom understood.
Tame easie Pops! who could so prodigally bleed,
To be thought Saints, and dye a Calendar with
red;
No prudent Heathen e're seduc'd could be,
To suffer Martyrdom for thee [Virtue].

(88-100)

Jove, an archetypal lecher, is admired because of the wide reach of his vice: he turns heaven itself into a den of sensual pleasure, and transcends time with his "everlasting whoring." In this manner, the Jove passage continues the interplay between Christian and pagan worlds. It is Astrea, after all, who begins the catalogue of "vertuous Fools"; she, as it were, drags the
Christian saints in her wake, only to have us find that Jove and his bordello shove them out of contest for the heights. We do go up first through Virtue--ascent--but we go farther up eventually to escape virtue: Vice aspires past the limits of height (as Satan aspired to "that bad eminence" in another poem).

Oldham now complements his citation of Jove's vice with the three historical personages who seem best to have immortalized themselves in the rolls of vice. First is Nebuchadnezzar, that "gallant Wretch, whose happy guilt / A fame upon the Ruins of a Temple built." The Babylonian destroyer considers his act worthy to raise him to godhead:

'I'll set the Sacred Pile on flame,  
'And in its Ashes write my lasting Name,  
'My name which thus shall be  
'Deathless as its own Deity."

(193-196)

His ambition of eternal fame is realized:

... in vain did envious Spite  
By fruitless methods try  
To raze his well-built Fame, and Memory  
Amongst Posterity:  
The Boutefeu can now Immortal write,  
While the inglorious Founder is forgotten quite.  

(205-210)

But Nero's fire, because more widespread than Nebuchadnezzar's, more nearly approaches the ideal illimitableness
of ideal vice:

Yet greater was that mighty Emperor;
  (A greater crime befitted his high Pow'r)
Who sacrific'd a City to a Jest,
  And shew'd he knew the grand intrigues of
humor best:
He made all Rome a Bonfire to his Fame,
  And sung, and play'd, and danc'd amidst the
Flame.

(211-216)

Nevertheless, Nero unfortunately failed to implement his action with that utter completeness which would have given him true immortality; if he had only "heav'd the noble frolick higher, / And made the People on that Fun'ral pile expire," then "the utmost pitch of glory he had won," and "No greater Monument could be / To consecrate him to eternity, / Nor should there need another Herald of his praise, but me" (219-226).

It is Faux, though, the villain of the Gunpowder Plot, who is the greatest of all. The passage devoted to him is, quite predictably, very close in conception and imagery to "Garnet's Ghost." Though long, it needs to be given in full:

And thou, yet greater Faux, the glory of our Isle,
    Whom baffled Hell esteems its chiepest Foyl;
'Twere injury should I omit thy name
    Whose Action merits all the breath of Fame.
Methinks, I see the trembling shades below
    Around in humble reverence bow;
Doubtful they seem, whether to pay their Loyalty
    To their dread Monarch, or to thee;
No wonder he (grown jealous of thy fear'd success)
Envy'd Mankind the honour of thy wickedness,  
And spoil'd that brave attempt, which must have made  
his grandeur less.  
How e're regret not, mighty Ghost,  
Thy Plot by treach'rous fortune crost,  
Nor think thy well deserved glory lost.  
Thou the full praise of Villany shalt ever share,  
And all will judge thy Act, compleat enough,  
when thou could'st dare,  
So thy great Master far'd, whose high disdain  
Contemn'd that Heaven, where he could not Reign,  
When he with bold Ambition strove  
T' usurp the Throne above,  
And led against the Deity an armed Train,  
Tho' from his vast designs he fell,  
O're-power'd by his Almighty Foe,  
Yet gain'd he Victory in his overthrow:  
He gain'd sufficient Triumph, that he durst Rebel,  
And 'twas some pleasure to be thought the  
great'st in Hell.  

(227-254)

The theme, so fully developed in "Garnet's Ghost," of Faux's  
vast evil as unalterably tied to his essential diabolism  
is quite clear.

The vastness of the crimes of this "great Triumvirate,"  
Nebuchadnezzar, Nero, and Faux, is illuminated by its  
transcendence of time. We will recall that Oldham uses a  
similar technique in "Garnet's Ghost." Nebuchadnezzar's  
"Memory amongst Posterity" and his "immortality" are pro-  
portionate to the wickedness of his deed, and Nero's pyro-  
technics "consecrate him to eternity." Faux, the greatest  
of all, will "ever share" the "full praise of villany";  
and his act is compared favorably with the cosmic evil  
of his "great master," Satan. As the persona moves to  
his climax--how he may surpass all of his predecessors in
evil—he inevitably enunciates his ambition in spatial, as opposed to temporal, terms:

Let your examples move me with a gen'rous fire,
Let them into my daring thoughts inspire
Somewhat compleatly wicked, some vast Gyant-crime,
Unknown, unheard, unthought of by all past and present time.

(256-260)

Like Garnet, he envisions in himself a capacity for the total crime, sees himself as the microcosm of vice, reflecting and embodying all evil, cutting across time in his cosmic reaches. He feels his very existence too restricted to match his vision:

I travel with a glorious mischief, for whose birth,
My Soul's too narrow, and weak Fate too feeble to bring forth.

(263-264)

Having in this manner found the "great Triumvirate" unequal to his own sinfulness, the speaker obliterates history and reaches all the way back to Adam, "the first debauch that sin'd." Here also he is unable to find sufficient guilt: Adam is scorned for "selling" "Humane kind" for "so small a Crime," and is pronounced "unworthy . . . to be thought / Father of the great first born Cain"; and more, "Unworthy me, / And all the braver part of his Posterity." Finally,
the libertine persona recognizes himself as the only sinner capable of matching his vision of sin; and he concludes (in terms strongly reminiscent of Garnet) with an expression of confidence that even Satan's cosmic evil falls short of his own:

Had the just Fates design'd me in his [Adam's] stead,
   I'd done some great, and unexampled deed:
       A deed, which should decry
           The Stoicks dull Equality,
   And shew that sin admits transcendency:
       A deed, wherein the Tempter should not share;
           Above what Heav'n could punish, and above what he could dare.
For greater crimes than his I would have fell,
   And acted somewhat, which might merit more than Hell.

(293-305)

The idea of the microcosm which to some extent influences Oldham's imagery in the "Satyr against Vertue" is much more persistent and consistent in his earliest significant poem, the extraordinarily long (seven hundred eighty-four lines) ode "To the Memory of My Dear Friend, Mr. Charles Morwent." The numerous passages in which Oldham makes explicit use of the idea are substantiated by two corollary imagistic patterns. Images of space, given added significance by the frequently posited correspondence between Morwent and the sun and between Morwent and God, form one of these patterns; the other emphasizes Morwent's obliteration of time. How these images interact to create the basic metaphor of the
poem will, I hope, be clear from the following considera-
tion of the pertinent passages.

The importance of the microcosm in this poem is clear
immediately, from the opening lines. If he could only
write a poem, says Oldham, commensurate to Morwent's
"Worth" and to his own "Wishes," then

All Helicon should soon be thine,
And pay a Tribute to thy Shrine.
The learned Sisters all transform'd should be,
No longer nine, but one Melpomene. (5-8)

Ideally, Oldham's muse would be not the tragic one alone,
but a contraction of all nine. Moving to an attempt to
do justice to Morwent's excellences, Oldham in a series
of specifically microcosmic images writes:

[Nature's] curious Hand here drew in Straights
and joyn'd
All the Perfections lodged in Humane kind;
Teaching her numerous Gifts to lie
Crampt in a short Epitome.
So Stars contracted in a Diamond shine,
And Jewels in a narrow Point confine
The Riches of an Indian Mine.
Thus subtle Artists can
Draw Nature's larger self within a Span:
A small Frame holds the World, Earth, Heav'ns
and all
Shrunk to the scant Dimensions of a Ball.
Those Parts which never in one Subject dwell,
But some uncommon Excellence foretel,
Like Stars did all constellate here,
And met together in one Sphere. (88-102)

Morwent's mind shone with such "clear Serenity" as
"caus'd [his] little World to seem all temp'rate Zone" (361-
362). Pride, the commonest and deadliest sin, never
could have stained Morwent's character, for

[Thy merits] were above the very Guilt of Pride,
Above all others, and thy own Hyperbole:
In thee the wid' st Extrems were joyn'd,
The loftiest, and the lowliest mind.
Thus tho some part of Heav'ns vast Round
Appear but low, and seem to touch the Ground,
Yet 'tis well known almost to bound the Spheres,
'Tis truly held to be above the Stars.  
(402-409)

The microcosm, as we may see from these passages, usually
implies a contraction of widespread qualities to a single
focal point, in this case Morwent, containing them all.
Thus it was most frequently symbolized by the circle,
just as God was, the microcosm both reflecting and includ-
ing in essence all that filled the universe.6  "What
Virtues few possess but by Retail," Oldham says, "In gross
could thee their Owner call; / They all did in thy single
Circle fall" (544-546). Just how inclusive this "Circle"
is has already been made clear: "No Strangers to thy
Love could be, / Whose Bounds were wide as all Mortality"
(137-138); "Nor was thy goodness bounded with so small
extent, / Or in such narrow Limits pent" (211-212); and

Thy Soul was big enough to pity Kings,
And look'd on Empires as poor humble things.
   Great as his boundless Mind,
   Who thought himself in one wide Globe confin'd,
   And for another pin'd.
   Great as that Spirit whose large Powers rowl
Thro' the vast Fabrick of this spatisous Bowl,
And tell the World as well as Man can boast a Soul.
(387-394)

The fact emerges even more clearly in this poem than in
the "Satyr against Vertue" that the concept of the microcosm
finds its natural—in fact, inevitable—expression in spatial
terms. We have just seen how Morwent contains within him-
self, for instance, a soul more vast than Alexander's ambi-
tion and equal in breadth to the world-soul. Already we are
moving, in Professor Nicolson's words, from the microcosm to
the "geocosm"; the next step is the macrocosm. The movement
is upward, Morwent being the center of a series of con-
centric spheres culminating in heaven—which is only an ex-
panded form of Morwent's soul. Oldham's poem is shot through
with images of space, clearly there to support the notion
of the correspondence which now, but also from his birth,
exists between Morwent and his creator. If he could, Oldham
says early in the poem, "I'd soon dissolve in one great
Sigh, / And upwards fly, / Glad to be exhal'd to Heav'n and
thee" (24-26). And later in the poem,

    Hence, tho at once thy Soul liv'd here and
    there,
    Yet Heaven alone its Thoughts did share;
    It own'd no home, but in the active Sphere.
    Its Motions always did to that bright Center
    rowl,
    And seem'd t' inform thee only on Parole.
    Look how the Needle does to its dear North in-
cline,
As wer't not fixt 'twould to that Region
climb;
Or mark what hidden force
Bids the Flame upwards take its course,
And makes it with that Swiftness rise,
As it 'twere wing'd by th' Air thro' which
it flies.

(563-573)

Finally, Morwent's apotheosis, which we should of course
expect to be imaged spatially, goes further than convention:

Go happy Soul, ascend the joyful Sky,
Joyful to shine with thy bright Company:
Go mount the spangled Sphere,
And make it brighter by another Star:
Yet stop not there, till thou advance yet
higher,
Till thou art swallow'd quite
In the vast unexhausted Ocean of Delight:
'.
Where Pleasures ever growing, ever new,
Immortal as thy self, and boundless too.

(708-720)

It is in Morwent's ultimate rise to "that fair beati-
fick Mirror of the Deity" that the pervading sense of space
has its significance. The constant attraction between him
and heaven during his terrestrial existence naturally
results in his eventual ascent. In several key passages
Morwent is associated with the deity and with the sun,
a reiteration of his essential other-worldliness, as though
"some part of Heav'ns vast Round . . . seem[ed] to touch the
Ground":

Nor may we think these God-like Qualities
Could stand in need of Votaries,
Which heretofore had challeng'd Sacrifice,
Each Assignation, each Converse
Gain'd thee some new Idolaters.

(265-269)

This passage, which almost borders on sacrilege, is reinforced a few lines later:

No Discord in thy Soul did rest,
Save what its Harmony increast.
Thy mind did with such regular Calmness move,
As held resemblance with the greater Mind above.

(327-330)

But Oldham goes even further to convey what seems to him Morwent's basic (and literal) godliness. Here the identification is also with the sun, giving added weight to the solar passages which follow later in the poem, but the real force of the following lines is their attribution to Morwent of that special act of God which most clearly makes Him God:

Thy Soul, which like the Sun, Heaven molded bright,
Disdained to shine with borrow'd Light.
Thus from himself th' Eternal Being grew,
And from no other Cause his Grandeur drew.

(377-380)

A few lines later Oldham, remembering how Morwent by the beauty of his character remained detached from any "Flattery and Obloquy of Fame," always by his radiance thwarting any "Malignant Tongues," finds these qualities most ably illuminated by comparison to the sun:
So Clouds which would obscure the Sun, oft
gilded be,
And Shades are taught to shine as bright as
he,
So Diamonds, when envious Night
Would shroud their Splendor, look most bright,
And from its Darkness seem to borrow Light.

(428-432)

Splendid as Morwent's soul always was, it nevertheless
flamed out in even greater brilliance as he approached
death:

So the bright Globe that rules the Skies,
Tho' he gild Heav'n with a glorious Rise,
Reserves his choicest Beams to grace his Set;
And then he looks most great,
And then in greatest Splendor dies.

(625-629)

And finally, even in an unfortunate passage describing the
reddened appearance of Morwent's body, ravaged by disease
("A sacred Rubrick does thy Carcass paint"), Oldham turns
to the sun for a comparison: "So Phoebus cloaths his dying
Rays each Night, / And blushes he can live no longer to
give Light" (764-765).

The crux of Oldham's consistent employment of spatial
imagery is Morwent's immortal position in the cosmos,
resulting from his ascent to heaven. In addition, there are
several passages in the poem which reinforce the idea of
Morwent's immortality by suggesting his transcendence of
time. "[Death] saw thy blooming Ripeness time prevent,"
Oldham says near the beginning of the poem, "She saw, and
envious grew, and straight her arrow sent" (36-37). A few
lines later, he develops the idea further, culminating in
a typical time-spanning reference to Adam:

Fate, when she did thy vigorous Growth behold,
   And all thy forward Glories told,
Forgot thy tale of Years, and thought thee old.
   The brisk Endowments of thy Mind
Scorning i' th' Bud to be confin'd,
Out-ran thy Age, and left slow Time behind;
Which made thee reach Maturity so soon,
   And at first Dawn present a full-spread Noon.
So thy Perfections with thy Soul agree,
   Both knew no Non-age, knew no Infancy.
Thus the first Patern of our Race began
His Life in middle-age, at's Birth a perfect Man.
   (52-63)

Morwent's power over time continues to be stressed in the
next stanza:

Thy busie Industry could Time dilate,
   And stretch the Thread of Fate;
Thy careful Thrift could only boast the Power
To lengthen Minutes, and extend an Hour.
   (69-72)

The earlier comparison to Adam is reiterated in a pair of
passages later in the poem: "Heav'n fenc'd thy heart with
its own Mound, / And forc'd the Tempter still from that
forbidden Ground" (448-449); "Such the first Founders of our
Blood, / While yet untempted, stood / Contented only to know
Good" (469-471). All these references to the "first Patern
of our Race" seem clearly to disclose Oldham's essentially
atemporal conception of Morwent's soul. The only uncorrupted
human beings before Morwent (except, presumably, Christ) were the very first ones, in that primeval garden of Eden at the beginning of time, and consequently it is to them that Oldham turns for an earthly likeness of Morwent's soul.

The climax, which is also the end of the poem, makes explicit precisely how extensive is Morwent's transcendence of time:

Thy Virtues shall embalm thy Name,
And make it lasting as the Breath of Fame.

When frailer Brass
Shall moulder by a quick Decrease;
When brittle Marble shall decay,
And to the Jaws of Time become a Prey.
Thy Praise shall live, when Graves shall buried lie,
Till Time it self shall die,
And yield its triple Empire to Eternity.

(776-784)

This sentiment, in some respects conventional in the elegy, is here more far-reaching than mere convention. The entire complex of consistently iterated images of space and of atemporality has its culmination in this final passage.

Oldham's other elegiac ode, "To the Memory of that Worthy Gentleman, Mr. Harman Atwood," like the ode to Morwent, uses metaphorically the idea of the microcosm, combining it with comparisons of Atwood to the sun and to God. It is unnecessary, having demonstrated this technique at such great length in the Morwent ode, to examine the other at the same length. It will be sufficient instead merely to
cite a few pertinent passages. First, concerning the micro-
cosm, Oldham says in speaking of Atwood's keen intellect
that

Here might the grave Disputers find
Themselves all baffl'd by a single Mind,
And see one vastly larger than their own,
Tho all of theirs were mixt in one.       (53-56)

He says further that Atwood's soul was "all in all, / And
all in every part" (103-104), and then, wondering how to do
justice to Atwood's character, he asks:

But how, blest Saint, shall I thy numerous
   Virtues sum,
   If one or two take up this room?
To what vast Bulk must the full Audit come?
As that bold Hand that drew the fairest Deity,
   Had many naked Beauties by,
And took from each a several Grace, and Air,
   and Line,
   And all in one Epitome did joyn
To paint his bright Immortal in a Form Divine:
   So must I do to frame thy Character.
I'll think whatever Men can good and lovely call,
   And then abridge it all,
And crowd, and mix the various Idea's there;
   And yet at last of a just Praise despair;
Whatever ancient Worthies boast,
Which made themselves and Poets their Describers
great,
   From whence old Zeal did Gods and Shrines create;  
   Thou hadst thy self alone engrost,
And all their scatter'd Glories in thy Soul did
meet.                                       (125-142)

An example of how Atwood's god-likeness is conveyed is the
following passage, in which Oldham says that Atwood had a
soul as great

As e'er th' Almighty Artist labour'd to infuse,
  Thro' all his Mint he did the brightest chuse;
    With his own Image stamp it fair,
And bid it ever the Divine Impression wear;
    And so it did, so pure, so well,
We hardly could believe him of the Race that fell:
    So spotless still, and still so good,
As if it never lodg'd in Flesh and Blood.

(59-66)

And finally, Atwood dispensed charity in much the same way
the sun dispenses light:

Such, and so universal is the Influence
Which the kind bounteous Sun does here dispense:
    With an unweari'd indefatigable Race,
      He travels round the World each day,
And visits all Mankind, and every Place,
    And scatters Light and Blessings all the way.

(89-94)

The symbolic pattern evident in these two odes, as in
the "Satyr against Vertue," is present in more or less degree
in almost all of Oldham's major odes. The pattern, as we
have seen it thus far, is a pervading sense of vast space,
resulting from the conception of the microcosm-macrocosm;
similes or metaphors based on the sun and on God; and claims
or pleas for the obliteration of time. Although these
elements may not be as pervasive in the other odes as in the
Morwent elegy, they seem clearly to have been uppermost in
Oldham's mind and to have influenced strongly the symbolic
constructs by which the odes are expressed. Rather than
considering all these poems at length, which would entail for
the most part merely an unfruitful and unnecessary repetition, I shall discuss only an additional four of them, and those fairly briefly: "Upon the Works of Ben. Johnson," "The Praise of Homer," "Paraphrase upon the Hymn of St. Ambrose," and "A Dithyrambic. The Drunkards Speech in a Mask." These four, together with the three already discussed, will, I hope, show how Oldham uses very similar imagistic complexes in widely varying contexts.

II

The basis of Oldham's admiration for Jonson is phrased this way in the first stanza:

Art's Compass to thy painful search we owe,  
Whereby thou went'st so far, and we may after go,  
By that we may Wit's vast, and trackless Ocean try,  
Content no longer, as before,  
Dully to coast along the shore,  
But steer a course more unconfin'd, and free,  
Beyond the narrow bounds, that pent Antiquity.  

(20-26)

But if Jonson has by his explorations widened our vision of "Wit," freeing us from the narrow one of antiquity, it is no more than we should expect, for "Never till thee the Theater possess'd / A Prince with equal Pow'r, and Greatness bless'd" (27-28). How great his power is, is now made clear: before Jonson, "its [the theater's] Poesie" was "unform'd,
and void"; it was

A rude, and undigested Lump . . .
Like the old Chaos, e're the birth of Light,
and Day,
Till thy brave Genius like a new Creator came,
And undertook the mighty Frame:

No sooner did thy Soul with active Force and
Fire
The dull and heavy Mass inspire,
But strait throughout it let us see
Proportion, Order, Harmony,
And every part did to the whole agree,
And strait appear'd a beauteous new-made world
of Poetry.

(37-51)

The idea of Jonson as a poetic parallel to God is reiterated
later in the poem, when Oldham praises his refusal to com-
pose poetry impetuously:

'Twas thus th' Almighty Poet (if we dare
Our weak, and meeker Acts with his compare)
When he the Worlds fair Poem did of old design,
That Work, which now must boast no longer date
than thine;

When Heaven consider'd, and th' Eternal Wit,
and sense,
Seem'd to take time, and care, and pains,
It shew'd that some uncommon Birth,
That something worthy of a God was coming forth;

And when the glorious Author all survey'd,
Survey'd whate're his mighty Labours made,
Well-pleas'd he was to find
All answer'd the great Model, and Idea of his
Mind.

(236-255)

Jonson's similarities to God are reinforced by those to
the sun. Praising him for not stooping to "low precocious
Fame," Oldham says of Jonson's fame that it was "no empty Vapour, rais'd beneath, / And form'd of common Breath," but

... 'twas a solid, whole, and perfect Globe of light,
    That shone all over, was all over bright,
And dar'd all sullying Clouds, and fear'd no darkning night;
Like the gay Monarch of the Stars and Sky,
    Who whereso're he does display
His sovereign Lustre, and majestick Ray,
Strait all the less, and petty Glories nigh
Vanish, and shrink away.

(269-276)

Both of these celestial reflections in Jonson, of God and the sun, imply the idea of the microcosm, since Jonson is regarded as their terrestrial miniature. In the crucial fourth stanza of the poem, the theme of which is the nature of Jonson's "great Mind," this idea is much more explicit:

Nature, and Art together met, and joyn'd,
Made up the Character of thy great Mind.
    That [Nature] like a bright and glorious Sphere,
Appear'd with numerous Stars embellish'd o're,
And much of Light to thee, and much of Influence bore;
This [Art] was the strong Intelligence, whose pow'r
Turn'd it about, and did th' unerring motions steer:
Concuring both like vital Seed, and Heat,
The noble Births they joyntly did beget,
    And hard 'twas to be thought,
Which most of force to the great Generation brought:
So mingling Elements compose our Bodies frame,
    Fire, Water, Earth, and Air
Alike their just Proportions share,
Each undistinguish'd still remains the same,
Yet can't we say that either's here, or there,
But all, we know not how, are scatter'd every where.

(76-92)
And the idea is even more specifically brought into play in Oldham's praise of Jonson for his accurate portrayal of human nature in his "characters":

Whate're Caprice or Whimsie leads awry  
Perverted, and seduc'd Mortality,  
Or does incline, and byass it  
From what's Discreet, and Wise, and Right, 
and Good, and Fit;  
All in thy faithful Glass were so express'd,  
As if they were Reflections of thy Breast,  
As if they had been stamp'd on thy own mind,  
And thou the universal vast Idea of Mankind.  
(130-137)

This concept of Jonson as a kind of microcosmic mirror reflecting basic truths about all human nature is substantiated by the timelessness of his art, which will have meaning for all mankind in all ages:

But thine [i.e., his plays] were wisely calculated fit  
For each Meridian, every Clime of Wit,  
For all succeeding time, and after-age,  
And all Mankind might thy vast Audience sit,  
And the whole world be justly made thy Stage:  
Till the last Scene of this great Theatre,  
Clos'd, and shut down,  
The numerous Actors all retire,  
And the grand Play of humane Life be done.  
(157-167)

Jonson's ability to transcend time is interwoven at the end of the poem with his similarity to the sun, noted above; and even more with his similarity to God, whose symbol, the circle, with its microcosmic implications, 7 is now related to the
obliteration of time:

Restless, and uncontroul'd it now shall pass
As wide a course about the World as he [the sun],
And when his long repeated Travels cease
Begin a new, and vaster Race,
And still tread round the endless Circle of Eternity.

(284-288)

Enthusiastic as Oldham's praise for Jonson is, it pales before that for Homer. For whereas Jonson was only like a god in his creative power, in that sense being a microcosm of the divine creator, Homer is a god (as attested by the first line: "Hail God of Verse!")), and is therefore both microcosm and macrocosm. Oldham begs pardon for taking "in vain" the "sacred, everlasting Name" of Homer, who is

... the unexhausted Ocean, whence
Sprung first, and still do flow th' eternal
Rills of Sense:
To none but Thee our Art Divine we owe,
From whom it had its Rise, and full Perfection too.
Thou art the mighty Bank, that ever do' st supply
Throughout the world the whole Poetick Company:
With thy vast stock alone they traffick for a name,
And send their glorious Ventures out to all the Coasts of Fame.

(9-16)

He is a creature "at whom Nature her self stood in amaze, / A Work, she never tried to mend, nor cou'd, / In which mistaking Man, by Chance she form'd a God" (102-104).
But divine though he be, he is eulogized for the same kind of thing, and in the same kind of imagery, as Jonson was; for example, the theme of discovery, which as we have seen is one of Oldham's favorites:

We scarce discern where thou, or Nature best has drawn,
   Nor is thy quick all-piercing Eye
   Or check'd, or bounded here:
But farther does surpass, and farther does descry:
Beyond the Travels of the Sun, and Year.
Beyond this glorious Scene of starry Tapestry,
   Where the vast Purliews of the Sky,
   And boundless waste of Nature lies,
   Thy Voyages thou mak'st, and bold Discoveries.
   (31-39)

The spatial orientation of this idea is complemented, as in the Jonson poem, by an insistence on the atemporal nature of Homer's work:

No Blasts of Heaven, or Ruine of the Spheres,
   Not all the washing Tides of rolling years,
   Nor the whole Race of batt'ring Time shall e're wear out
   The great Inscriptions, which thy Hand has wrought,
Here thou, and they shall live, and bear an endless date,
Firm, as enroll'd in the eternal Register of Fate.
   (147-152)

Not that vast universal Flame,
   Which at the final Doom
This beauteous Work of Nature must consume,
   And Heav'n and all its Glories in one Urn entomb,
   Will burn a nobler, or more lasting Frame:
As firm, and strong as that it shall endure,
Through all the Injuries of Time secure,
Nor die, till the whole world its Funeral Pile
become.  

(167-174; the last lines)

When Oldham comes to laud God himself, in the "Para-
phrase upon the Hymn of St. Ambrose," the referents by
which he expresses his praise are quite similar to those
in the Homer ode. There seems little distinction imagist-
ically between the "God of Verse" and the "Sovereign
Monarch of the Universe." God as macrocosm is all-pervasive
--both through time and space:

Farther than Natures utmost shores and limits
stretch
The streams of thy unbounded Glory reach;
Beyond the straits of scanty Time, and
Place,
Beyond the ebbs and flows of matter's narrow
Seas
They reach, and fill the Ocean of Eternity and
Space.  

(21-25)

By contrast, God as microcosm is in Mary's womb:

Th' Almighty thought it no disdain
To dwell in the pure Virgins spotless Womb,
There did the boundless Godhead, and whole
Heav'n find room,
And a small point the Circle of Infinity contain.

(192-196)

And, predictably, God's omnipotence transcends time; in this
passage about judgment day, time is absorbed by "eternity,"
conventionally a temporally oriented concept but clearly spatialized here:

Affrighted Nature trembles at the dismal Day,  
And shrinks for fear, and vanishes away:  
Both that, and Time breath out their last,  
and now they die,  
And now are swallow'd up and lost in vast Eternity.

(218-221)

"The Drunkards Speech in a Mask" is a dithyrambic poem rather than an ode; however, the distinction between it and the "Satyr against Vertue," as far as genre is concerned, seems largely a matter of terminology rather than tone or effect. In stanzaic structure, the "Drunkards Speech" is like the odes, and its very slight dramatic frame is only a little more explicit than that of the "Satyr against Vertue." For these reasons, and since this poem illustrates Oldham's use of the same imagistic patterns I have been discussing in the odes, I feel that this is the proper place to discuss it. Personally, I consider it one of Oldham's finest poems. The gradual expansion of the speaker's vision of drunkenness is quite effectively achieved, encompassing at the end the whole universe; but an underlying, essential cynicism evident throughout the poem is also expanded by implication, until at the end the drunkard's theme is clear: vast disillusionment must be met by vast drunkenness.
The drunkard opens with advice to those who would restrict his drinking that their admonitions are useless; his cynicism is immediately manifest:

Hence holy Sham! in vain your fruitless Toil:
Go, and some inexperienced Fol beguile,
To some raw ent'ring Sinner cant, and Whine
Who never knew the worth of Drunkenness and Wine.

(4-6; my italics)

He next introduces another theme which pervades the poem, the divinity of wine:

I've tried and prov'd, and found it all Divine:
It is resolv'd, I will drink on, and die,
I'll not one minute lose, not I,
To hear your troublesom Divinity.

(8-11)

The conflict between a religion of convention and a religion of drunkenness is resolved throughout in favor of the latter. "That Gulp was worth a Soul, like it, it went, / And thoroughout new Life, and Vigour sent," says the drunkard; "I feel it warm at once my Head, and Heart, / I feel it all in all, and all in every part" (14-17). Wine's appeal, and the reason it is elevated to divinity, is its power over time: "Let the vile Slaves of Bus'ness toil, and strive . . . While we Life's tedious journey shorter make" (18-20). The relation of wine and divinity is now developed by reference to the gods, but developed simultaneously with
with the poem's underlying cynicism:

Thus live the Gods (if ought above our selves there be)
They live so happy, unconcern'd, and free;
Like us they sit, and with a careless Brow
Laugh at the petty Jars of Humane kind below.
Like us they spend their Age in gentle Ease,
Like us they drink; for what were all their
Heav'n, alas!
If sober, and compell'd to want that Happiness.
(22-28)^9

But "almighty Wine" is also the origin of all worthy human endeavors. This idea is conveyed by an image startlingly significant to a reader fresh from the ode "Upon the Works of Ben. Johnson," lines 46-47 ("No sooner did thy Soul with active Force and Fire / The dull and heavy Mass inspire," comparing Jonson's poetic achievement with God's creation of the universe from chaos):

Thou art the Worlds great Soul, that heav'nly Fire,
Which dost our dull half-kindled mass inspire.
We nothing gallant, and above our selves produce,
Till thou do'st finish Man, and Reinfuse.
Thou art the only source of all, the world calls great,
Thou didst the Poets first, and they the Gods create.
(34-39)

The drunkard then declares Alexander's "wide Victories, and boundless Rage" due not to "War alone," but also to wine: "He knew, he ne'er could conquer by Sobriety, / And drunk as well as fought for universal Monarchy" (49-50).
The power of wine to conquer time is reiterated in a remarkable passage in which a bottle of wine is likened to time itself, every moment of time counterbalanced by a drink, in an unusually effective enunciation of the carpe diem philosophy:

'Sdeath! here's a minute lost, an Age, I mean, Slipt by, and ne'er to be retriev'd again. For pity suffer not the precious Juyce to die, Let us prevent our own, and its Mortality: Like it, our Life with standing and Sobriety is pall'd, And like it too, when dead, can never be recall'd. Push on the Glass, let it measure out each hour, For every Sand an Health let's pour: Swift as the rowling Orbs above, And let it too as regularly move: Swift as Heav'ns drunken red-fac'd Traveller, the Sun, And never rest, till his last Race be done, Till time it self be all run out, and we Have drunk our selves into Eternity. (55-68)

The drunkard next scorns "spightful Nature," who "to small Drink our Isle thought fit to damn, / And set us out o' th' reach of wine, / In hope strait Bounds could our vast Thirst confine," pointing out that Englishmen have learned "to fetch supply" from "Forein Lands"; "Rare Art!", he concludes, "that makes all the wide world our home, / Makes every Realm pay Tribute to our Luxury" (81-88). He then likens the inspiration of prophets to that of drunkards:

Go, ask me, what's the rage young Prophets feel, When they with holy Frenzy reel:
Drunk with the Spirits of infus'd Divinity,  
    They rave, and stagger, and are mad, like me.  
(108-111)

In the concluding stanza, all these thematic and imagistic threads are interwoven to produce a really cosmic vision of wine's part in human existence. As his cynicism comes more and more to the fore, the drunkard keeps expanding his capacity for drink, and concludes his speech with a final declaration of wine's power to nullify time. The stanza will have to be quoted in full:

Oh, what an Ebb of Drink have we?  
Bring us a Deluge, fill us up the Sea,  
Let the vast Ocean be our mighty Cup;  
We'll drink 't, and all its Fishes too like Loaches up.  
Bid the Canary Fleet land here: we'll pay  
The Fraight, and Custom too defray:  
Set every man a Ship, and when the Store Is emptied, let them strait dispatch, and Sail for more:  
'Tis gone: and now have at the Rhine,  
With all its petty Rivulets of Wine:  
The Empire's Forces with the Spanish well combine;  
We'll make their Drink too in confederacy joyn.  
'Ware France the next: this Round Bourdeaux shall swallow,  
Champagn, Langon, and Burgundy shall follow.  
Quick let's forestal Lorain;  
We'll starve his Army, all their Quarters drain,  
And without Treaty put an end to the Campaign, Go, set the Universe a tilt, turn the Globe up, Squeeze out the last, the slow unwilling Drop: A pox of empty Nature! since the World's drawn dry,  
'Tis time we quit mortality,  
'Tis time we now give out, and die,  
Lest we are plagu'd with Dulness and Sobriety.
Beset with Link boys, we'll in triumph go,
A Troop of stagging'ring Ghosts to the Shades
below:
Drunk we'll march off, and reel into the Tomb,
Natures convenient dark Retiring Room;
And there from Noise remov'd, and all tumultuous strife,
Sleep out the dull Fatigue, and long Debauch of Life.

(112-140)

At the heart of the imagistic complex so important to the poems I have been discussing is the concept of the microcosm. Although its application inevitably varies according to the subject of the poem, this concept seems to work in essentially the same way in all of them, that is, to establish the subject as a symbol for the vast manifestation of its essential component. Thus, the speaker in the "Satyr against Vertue" becomes a symbol for all vice (in much the same way, in fact, that Garnet symbolizes all evil in "Garnet's Ghost"); Jonson for all poetic excellence; Homer for the entire poetic impulse; and the drunkard for universal drunkenness.
Notes

1 The only exception is just as unfortunate. George N. Shuster undoubtedly snuffed out any interest his readers might have had in Oldham when he made the offhanded and unsupported remark that "John Oldham, whose diatribes in heroic couplets are not without their meed [?] of coarse, obscene power, wrote Pindaricks which set a record for tinniness and bathos that later eras would hardly rival. He paraphrased both Horace and Saint Ambrose in long, wobbly, irregular stanzas; he wrote what is probably the worst autobiographical ode in the language..." (The English Ode from Milton to Keats [New York, 1940], p. 128).


4 Loc.cit.


7 Ibid.

8 Compare the ode to Atwood, lines 103-104: "[Atwood's soul was] all in all, / And all in every part."

9 The imagery is Epicurean and the whole context of
course libertine. This poem again raises the question of Oldham's literary relations with Rochester. Cf. above, Chapter I, page 14.
Chapter IV

Minor Poems

'Tis now high time to end, for fear I grow
More tedious than old Doaters, when they woo,
Than travel'd Fops, when far-fetch'd lies they
prate,
Or flatter'ring Poets, when they dedicate.
No dull forgiveness I presume to crave,
Nor vainly for my tiresom length ask leave:
Lest I, as often formal Coxcombs use,
Prolong that very fault, I would excuse.
(Closing lines of "A Letter from the
Country to a Friend in Town")

The Satyrs upon the Jesuits are clearly Oldham's most
significant poems; they were responsible to a large extent
for his contemporary popularity and they have almost solely
occupied his modern commentators. Furthermore, they com-
prise, along with the odes, the great bulk of Oldham's ori-
ginal work, the remainder of the corpus being composed
largely of classical imitations, paraphrases, and trans-
lations. While these latter are not bad poems, the most
noteworthy thing about them is that in some of them Oldham
altered the (usually) Roman setting to a modern English
one, for example the following passage from Horace's Art
of Poetry:

Quid autem
Caecilio, Plautoque; dabit Romanus ademptum
Vergilio Varioque? ego cur, adquirere pauca
si possum, invideo, cum lingua Catonis, et
Enni
sermonem patrium ditaverit et nova rerum
nomina protulerit?

(53-58)\(^1\)

Oldham's corresponding lines are:

Why should the peevish Criticks now forbid
To Lee, and Dryden, what was not deny'd
To Shakespear, Ben, and Fletcher heretofore,
For which they praise, and commendation bore?
If Spencer's Muse be justly so ador'd
For that rich copiousness, wherewith he stor'd
Our Native Tongue; for Gods sake why should I
Straight be thought arrogant, if modestly
I claim and use the self-same liberty?

(96-104)

There is considerable doubt whether Oldham was the
first to adopt this technique in imitation. He himself,
at any rate, certainly thought he was, judging from the
Advertisement to Some New Pieces (1681), in which his Art
of Poetry was published. Justifying his own version of
Horace's poem, which had already been translated by Jonson
and the Earl of Roscommon, Oldham writes:

... I fell to thinking of some course, whereby
I might serve my self of the Advantages, which
those that went before me, have either not mind-
ed, or scrupulously abridged themselves of. This
I soon imagined was to be effected by putting
Horace into a more modern dress, than hitherto
he has appeared in, that is by making him speak,
as if he were living and writing now. I there-
fore resolved to alter the Scene from Rome to
London, and to make use of English names of
Men, Places, and Customs, where the Parallel
would decently permit, which I conceived would
give a kind of new Air to the Poem, and render it more agreeable to the relish of the present Age.

Samuel Johnson credited Oldham and Rochester with the innovation in his *Life of Pope*:

This mode of imitation, in which the ancients are familiarized, by adapting their sentiments to modern topicks, by making Horace say of Shakespeare what he originally said of Ennius, and accommodating his satires on Pantolabus and Nommentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our own time, was first practised in the reign of Charles the Second by Oldham and Rochester, at least I remember no instances more ancient. ²

And Harold F. Brooks approves Johnson's statement: "Johnson appears to be right: Oldham and Rochester were the first to adopt Boileau's practice. And Oldham, in the Advertisement to *Some New Pieces*, 1681, was the first to state the theory fully and explicitly, though he was following the hint of Dryden's Preface to *Ovid's Epistles*, 1680."³

However, Oldham's claim as a trail-blazer in this respect is probably exaggerated. As John Butt rightly points out, "We need not credit one man with an innovation which must have occurred simultaneously to many. This was a time when men approved of spirited translations, from which 'imitations' were the inevitable development."⁴

If the value of Oldham's imitations as "firsts" is controverted, and it clearly must be, then the truth is that there is little outstanding about them. They are
examples of a kind of poetry which was very popular in Oldham's time, as Butt mentions; there is in them no consistent imagistic or other pattern which marks them as Oldham's. This lack of distinction may perhaps be illustrated by a few comparisons of Oldham's work with another classical paraphraser and imitator, the Earl of Roscommon, whose recent *Art of Poetry* Oldham felt called upon to praise in the Advertisement to his own translation ("[Roscommon has] lately performed it with such admirable success, as almost cuts off all hope in any after Pretenders of ever coming up to what he has done"). The passages I have chosen are almost random; others would have served equally well to emphasize the similarity of the two versions of Horace's poem.

Lines 24-31 of the original are rendered thus by Roscommon:

Most Poets fall into the grossest Faults,
Deluded by a seeming Excellence:
By striving to be short, they grow Obscure,
And when they would write smoothly, they
want Strength,
Their Spirits sink; while others that affect
A lofty Stile, swell to a Tympany;
Some tim'rous Wretches start at ev'ry Blast,
And fearing Tempests, dare not leave the Shore;
Others, in Love with wild Variety,
Draw Boars in Waves, and Dolphins in a Wood;
Thus fear of Erring, join'd with want of Skill,
Is a most certain way of Erring still.

Oldham's corresponding lines are:
Most Poets, Sir, ('tis easie to observe)
Into the worst of faults are apt to swerve
Through a false hope of reaching excellence;
Avoiding length, we often cramp our Sense,
And make 't obscure; oft, when we'd have our
stile
Easie, and flowing, lose its force the while:
Some, striving to surmount the common flight,
Soar up in airy Bombast out of sight.
Others, who fear to a bold pitch to trust
Themselves, flag low, and humbly sweep the dust:
And many fond of seeming marvellous,
While they too carelessly transgress the Laws
Of Likelihood, most odd Chimeras feign,
Dolphins in Woods, and Boars upon the Main.
Thus they, who would take aim, but want the skill,
Miss always, and shoot wide, or narrow still.

Similarly, lines 240-243 of Horace's poem ("My aim shall be poetry, so moulded from the familiar that anybody may hope for the same success, may sweat much and yet toil in vain when attempting the same: such is the power of order and connexion, such the beauty that may crown the commonplace") are given almost identical readings by Roscommon:

Begin with Truth, then give Invention scope,
And if your Stile be natural and smooth,
All Men will try, and hope to write as well;
And (not without much Pains) be undeceiv'd,
So much good Method and Connexion may
Improve the common and the plainnest Things;

and by Oldham:

Take a known Subject, and invent it well,
And let your Stile be smooth and natural:
Though others think it easie to attain,
They'll find it hard, and imitate in vain;
So much does method and connexion grace
The common'st things, the plainest matters raise.
The famous "Ut pictura poesis" passage (lines 361-364) will serve as a final example. The Latin may be translated literally:

A poem is like a picture: one strikes your fancy more, the nearer you stand; another, the farther away. This courts the shade, that will wish to be seen in the light, and dreads not the critic insight of the judge. This pleased but once; that, though ten times called for, will always please. 6

Roscommon writes:

Poems, like Pictures, are of diff'rent Sorts,  
Some better at a distance, others near,  
Some love the Dark, some chuse the clearest Light,  
And boldly challenge the most piercing Eye,  
Some please for once, some will for ever please.

And Oldham has:

Poems with Pictures a resemblance bear;  
Some (best at distance) shun a view too near:  
Others are bolder, and stand off to sight;  
These love the shade, those choose the clearest light,  
And dare the survey of the skilfull'est eyes:  
Some once, and some ten thousand times will please.

In view of such conformity, which could be illustrated in other poems as well, it seems to me that extensive analysis of these imitations, paraphrases, and translations is of dubious, if any, significance. Therefore, I shall not discuss them any further, but shall turn instead to some of the
shorter original poems—that is, those other than the odes and the Satyrs upon the Jesuits.

I

Included in Oldham's last volume, Poems and Translations by the Author of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits (1683) are four short erotic "elegies." Oldham's Advertisement to the volume claims that "If it be their [the poems in the volume] Fate to perish, and go the way of all mortal Rhimes, 'tis no great matter in what method they have been placed, no more than whether Ode, Elegy, or Satyr have the honour of Wiping first." Nevertheless, there is some significance in the grouping together of these erotic elegies. They are all addressed to "Cosmelia," and the titles—"Presenting a Book to Cosmelia"; "The Parting"; "Complaining of Absence"; and "Promising a Visit"—indicate a loose narrative sequence which both adumbrates and is substantiated by imagistic and thematic modulations from poem to poem.

The opening lines of the first elegy, "Presenting a Book to Cosmelia," express the interlacing images of space and the microcosm in the precise terms of their significance for the poem:

Go, humble Gift, go to that matchless Saint,  
Of whom thou only wast a Copy meant:
And all, that's read in thee, more richly
find
Compriz'd in the fair Volume of her mind;
That living System, where are fully writ
All those high Morals, which in Books we
meet.  

(1-6)

The attribution of sainthood to Cosmelia is more than an
offhand compliment. It immediately establishes an essen-
tial relationship between her and heavenly spirits, and
hence initiates the spatial correspondence between heaven
and earth which pervades the poem. The "book" is not
specifically named, but the Bible would be a certain can-
date. At any rate, it is a book written about "high Morals,"
and every one of its dictates is found, but "more richly,"
in Cosmelia's mind. The book, in short, is a microcosm of
Cosmelia's mind, with the qualification that it is non-
vital, whereas Cosmelia translates the "high morals" into
everyday rules of conduct. This virtue is developed further:

Nor is her Talent lazily to know
As dull Divines, and holy Canter's do;
She acts what they only in Pulpits prate,
And Theory to Practice does translate.  

(9-12)

It is through this active good, springing from "Choice"
rather than "Necessity," that her essential similarity to
the Saints is illuminated. Her "Virtue" does not flow
"from her Duty"; rather, "she is good, because she will be
so." More specifically,
Her Virtue scorns at a low pitch to file,
'Tis all free Choice, nought of Necessity:
By such soft Rules are Saints above confin'd,
Such is the Tie, which them to Good does bind.
(17-20)

Cosmelia's virtues are now extended to all that is good
in womankind, her soul a microcosmic gleaning of those
virtues:

The scatter'd Glories of her happy Sex
In her bright Soul as in their Center mix:
And all, that they possess but by Retail,
She hers by just Monopoly can call.
(21-24)

Furthermore, her "sole Example does more virtues shew,/
Than Schoolmen ever taught, or ever knew" (25-26).

What these "Virtues" are exactly, Oldham next enumer-
ates, elaborating on the "scatter'd Glories" and the "more
Virtues" mentioned above. Her actions "did e're within
her Practice fall, / Which for the attonement of a Bush
could call"; "No word of hers e're greeted any ear, / But
what a Saint at her last gasp might hear"; her thoughts
"have [n]ever sullied been / With the least print, or stain
of native Sin"; she is devout "as holy Hermits are, / Who
share their time 'twixt Extasie, and Prayer"; she is modest
"as infant Roses in their Bloom, / Who in a Blush their
fragrant Lives consume"; she is so chaste that "the Dead
themselves are only more, / Who lie divorc'd from Objects,
and from Power"; and finally, she is so pure that "could
Virtue in a Shape appear, / 'Twould chuse to have no other Form, but Her." If we might expect all these virtues to add up to sainthood, as in fact Oldham has implied throughout the poem, we should not be quite imaginative enough. For now Cosmelia has soared from a position spatially inferior to one superior to the saints: "So much a Saint, I scarce dare call her so, / For fear to wrong her with a name too low" (41-42).

In transcending the saints in virtue, Cosmelia ascends to angelic heights. The final lines of the poem give new significance to the spatial structure which pervades the poem: Cosmelia has descended from her exalted position for our instruction, and indeed her spirit does seem more than a mere microcosmic reflection of those superior heavenly lights:

Such the SeraphickBrightness of her mind,  
I hardly can believe her Womankind:  
But think some nobler Being does appear,  
Which to instruct the World, has left the Sphere,  
And Condescends to wear a Body here.  

(43-47)

But more likely, she is "mortal," a microcosm of the heavenly virtues inherent, but for Eve, in her sex:

Or, if she mortal be, and meant to show  
The greater Art by being form'd below;  
Sure Heaven preserv'd her by the Fall uncurs'd,  
To tell how good the Sex was made at first.  

(48-51)
The concluding couplet, which reiterates the earlier "The scatter'd Glories of her happy Sex / In her bright Soul as in their Center mix," gives a new spatial dimension to Cosmelia's virtue. If she reflects as we might say, vertically, the brilliance of heaven, she also reflects horizontally, transcending time, the pristine glory of prelapsesarian woman.

In the next elegy, "The Parting," the spatial referents are more concrete, most of the emphasis being on visualization. Oldham is complaining about being parted from his love, and he dwells most strongly on his inability to see her—undoubtedly a symbolic sort of sight, "seeing" because it implies proximity to the viewed object. To some degree, the idea extensively developed in the preceding poem of Cosmelia as above mere mortals carries over into this poem. "Too happy had I been indeed, if Fate / Had made it lasting, as she made it great," Oldham says;

But 'twas the Plot of unkind Destiny,
To lift me to, then snatch me from my Joy:
She rais'd my Hopes, and brought them just in view,
And then in spight the pleasing Scene withdrew. (3-6)

By being with Cosmelia, he has been "lifted" to his "Joy"; his hopes have been "rais'd." But already in these lines the emphasis on visualization is becoming evident. "Scene" has an obvious visual denotation reinforced by the two
similes that follow:

So He of old the promis'd Land survey'd,
Which he might see, but never was to tread:
So Heav'n was by that damned Caitiff seen,
He saw't, but with a mighty Gulf between,
He saw't, to be more wretched, and despair a-gen.

(7-11)

Moses atop Mount Nebo, his old eyes gazing yearningly across the Jordan to the promised land; and Satan, his misery increased because he can see Heaven but can never hope to cross the "mighty Gulf" separating him from it—both of these situations match the poignancy of Oldham's distant glimpse ("just in view") of happiness with Cosmelia. The common denominator of all three is the vast space by which the viewer is removed from the object desired.

In the rather scenic simile which concludes the poem, Oldham develops more fully this kind of interposing space. He uses the image of a "young Merchant" who, cast out by his "Sire unkind," "Resigns himself to every faithless Wave, and Wind"; his "kind Mistris" comes down to the dock to see him off, and as the ship sails, the distance between them gradually increases until the lady is out of sight. The passage achieves a certain amount of poignancy, mainly owing to the lover's efforts to continue seeing his mistress even after she is no longer visible:

And when at length the launching Vessel flies,
And severs first his Lips, and then his Eyes;
Long he looks back to see what he adores,
And while he may, views the beloved Shores.
Such just concerns I at your Parting had,
With such sad Eyes your turning Face survey'd:
Reviewing, they pursu'd you out of sight,
Then sought to trace you by left Tracks of
Light:
And when they could not Looks to you convey,
Tow'rs the lov'd Place they took delight to
stray,
And aim'd uncertain Glances still that way.  

(22-32)

The emphasis on visualization characteristic of the poem is noteworthy in this passage. In addition, the sea's connotation of vast distance reiterates metaphorically the opening thought of the poem, that Cosmelia is "above" the poet, with the obvious implication that he is unworthy of her. As much a gulf separates them as the one that caused Satan to "despair agen." The metaphor is, of course, not unusual; we still speak of people being "oceans apart." But it is precisely the physical development of a cliché which makes the passage come so surprisingly alive. The expected sterility is balked by emphasizing the apparent.  

The third elegy, "Complaining of Absence," returns to the more spiritual kind of spatial distance of the first elegy. In this poem, Oldham complains that "Bus'ness" is preventing him from rejoining Cosmelia. He has been apart from his "Joy, and Happiness" for "Ten days," "A year in any Lover's Calendar," and is still being detained by "the same Hindrance . . . Which me at first from your lov'd Sight constrain'd." The simile which illuminates
his frustrated attempts to rejoin his love harks back to 
the first elegy in its paralleling of Cosmelia and heavenly 
spirits:

Oft I resolve to meet my Bliss, and then
My Tether stops, and pulls me back agen:
So when our raised Thoughts to Heav'n aspire,
Earth stifles them, and choaks the good desire.

(7-10)

But a few lines later the religious character of the upper 
reaches has been suddenly transposed to another key:

Lovers should be as unconfin'd as Air,
Free as its wild Inhabitants from Care:
So free those happy Lovers are above,
Exempt from all Concerns but those of Love:
But I, poor Lover militant below,
The Cares, and Troubles of dull Life must know.

(15-20)

The idea informing the first elegy of Cosmelia as a saint 
is here reiterated, but now in the vocabulary of the lover. 
Instead of being "free" to praise and love God, those "hap-
py Lovers . . . above" are at liberty to love each other, 
untrammeled by the "Troubles of dull Life" which plague the 
"Lover militant" here below. What is being described is 
a sort of Lovers' Church. Just as members of the Church 
Militant on earth are beset by earthly "Tethers," so Lovers 
Militant are subject to the "drudgery of Fate."

"Promising a Visit," the last elegy of the set, is both 
a reiteration and a culmination of the themes and images of
the three preceding. To begin with, the increasingly
physical orientation is continued. In the first elegy,
the poet is pre-eminently occupied with Cosmelia's virtues,
which are present in such profusion as to make "too low"
the name of "Saint." In "The Parting," Cosmelia is still
regarded as something out of reach, but in the way that
Canaan was out of Moses' reach, or Heaven out of Satan's--
something seen physically but separated by a great distance
(both concretely and symbolically) from the viewer. Cos-
melia is already becoming less amorphous than she seemed
to be in the first elegy. In "Complaining of Absence,"
as I have just suggested, the saintly implications of
heaven developed so extensively in "Presenting a Book to
Cosmelia" and briefly referred to in this poem ("So when
our raised Thoughts to Heav'n aspire, / Earth stifles them,
and choaks the good desire") are made profane and heaven
is filled with "happy Lovers." The conclusion of the poem
indicates the increased emphasis on the physical aspect of
love:

Too long that Jilt ["Bus'ness"] has thy proud
Rival been,
And made me by neglectful Absence sin;
But I'll no more obey its Tyranny,
Nor that, nor Fate it self shall hinder me
Henceforth from seeing, and enjoying thee.
(27-31)

"Enjoying" is clarified in line four of "Promising a Visit":
Sooner may Art, and easier far divide
The soft embracing waters of the Tide,
Which with united Friendship still rejoyn,
Than part my Eyes, or Arms, or Lips from thine.

(1-4)

The movement from the reverent worship of "Presenting a Book" to the primarily physical "enjoyment" of "Promising a Visit" is thus evident from the poem's opening lines. It is also evident throughout the poem from a tonal atmosphere markedly different from the first elegy. The poet no longer talks as if he were thinking of abstract contemplation of Cosmelia's excellences. "Fly swift, ye minutes, and contract the space / Of Time, which holds me from her dear Embrace," he says; "When I am there I'll bid you kindly stay, / I'll bid you rest, and never glide away" (13-16). These lines, besides reinforcing the physical relationship with his love, introduce a theme which almost informs the entire poem--the poet's desire to obliterare time. It is connected with the spatial structure evident particularly in the first elegy and less in the other two.

In "Presenting a Book to Cosmelia," images of space are so pervasive and insistent that the poem's structure does become spatial. Cosmelia is essentially a saint, an earthly reflection of heavenly attributes. These are patently eternal and timeless, since for heaven there is no beginning or end. In short, they are a part of Being rather than Becoming. In this sense, the structure of the poem
becomes a metaphor for its meaning: Cosmelia's sanctity is reiterated and illuminated by the spatial structure. But what is likely to happen when the subject of the poem is no longer a creature to be awed by but not to be touched? Or expressed another way, what will probably happen when Cosmelia is regarded as part of Becoming? The answer is that time will assume a great significance, whereas before it had none. The poet as lover has unquestionably increased his "enjoyment" by adjusting to a physical perspective; but he has also lost the sense of timelessness possible in the abstraction of the earlier poem.

The lover's efforts to combine physical enjoyment with metaphysical transcendence of time result in his attempts to control the passage of time, illustrated in lines 13-16 quoted above, and by line 20:

Thither [in Cosmelia's "dear Embrace"] when
Bus'ness gives me a Release
To lose my Cares in soft, and gentle Ease,
I'll come, and all arrears of Kindness pay,
And live o're my whole Absence in one day.

(17-20)

His effort to reconcile the Cosmelias of the first and fourth elegies is also evident in the two "spatial" passages of the latter poem. The needle pointing north and the upward motion of fire are twin symbols of his "Soul":

Not the touch'd Needle (emblem of my Soul)
With greater Rev'rence trembles to its Pole,
Nor Flames with surer instinct upwards go,  
    Than mine, and all their motions tend to you.  
          (9-12)

This rising motion is reiterated a few lines later. In  
the second elegy of the set, "The Parting," Oldham had  
written:

Not Souls of dying Sinners, when they go,  
Assur'd of endless Miseries below,  
Their Bodies more unwillingly desert,  
    Than I from you, and all my Joys did part.  
          (12-15)

Now, in "Promising a Visit," he neatly reverses from downward to upward motion, a subtle accommodation to the more pleasant (to himself) theme of the final poem:

Not Souls, releas'd from humane Bodies, move  
    With quicker haste to meet their Bliss above:  
    Than I, when freed from Clogs, that bind me now,  
    Eager to seize my Happiness, will go.  
          (21-24)

Even if a "fierce Angel" should try to "stop the entrance to my Paradise," Oldham concludes (the image of Eden recalling the conclusion of the first poem that "Heaven preserv'd her by the Fall uncurs'd"),

I'll venture, and his slighted Bolts despise,  
Swift as the wings of Fear, shall be my Love,  
And me to her with equal speed remove:  
Swift, as the motions of the Eye, or Mind,  
I'll thither fly, and leave slow Thought behind.  
          (28-32)

These lines reinforce the idea of lines 9-12 (the poet
"tends" toward Cosmelia instinctively, just as the needle points north and flames go "upwards") and at the same time convey the finally successful effort to cut the ties of "Bus'ness" that have been hampering him.

II

"Among the minor poems," writes Harold F. Brooks, "The Careless Good Fellow is an admirable toper's song, unaccountably ignored by anthologists." This is a disappointing evaluation, because it dismisses the poem as only a drinking song with no implications. The "good fellow" impatiently brushes aside the most troublesome events of current history, declaring them unimportant as long as he has his bottle:

A pox of this fooling and plotting of late,  
What a pother, and stir has it kept in the State?  
Let the Rabble run mad with Suspicions, and Fears,  
Let them scuffle, and jar, till they go by the ears:  
Their Grievances never shall trouble my pate,  
So I can enjoy my dear Bottle at quiet.  

(1-6)

This first stanza illustrates the tone of the poem. The Catholics executed for treason were "Coxcombs," who "would barter their ease / And their Necks for a Toy, a thin Wafer and Mass" (7-8); their mistake was not drinking enough:
"He has no room for Treason, that's top-full of Wine" (12). The doings of Parliament are insignificant: "I mind not the Members and makers of Laws, / Let them sit or Prorogue, as his Majesty please" (13-14). Similarly, the controversy over Charles's successor ("We've a good King already: and he deserves laughter / That will trouble his head with who shall come after"); the Dutch Wars ("What care I how leagues with the Hollander go?"); and the actions of King Louis of France ("The Bully of France, that aspires to Renown / By dull cutting of Throats, and vent'ring his own")—all are dismissed as trivialities in comparison with getting enough to drink.

It seems to me that the persona is a Royalist being satirized in quite traditional terms as a "sot" who misses the Jesuit plotting and other momentous current events. One recalls that

'Plotting and Sotting' were among the earliest divisions of English party politics, and the tories, faithful to the native brew, satirized the 'syrop of soot and old shoes' imbibed in whig coffee-houses, imputing to their opponents a degree of wakefulness inconsistent with the full requirements of seventeenth-century patriotism [: 'And better it is to be honestly sotting / Than live to be hanged for caballing and plotting.'].

Also worthy of notice is the anapestic meter of the poem, unusual at the time. It is a meter admirably suited to the theme, since it swings along with implied light-hearted-
ness and carelessness. "The Good Fellow" is the only poem in which Oldham varied substantially from the heroic couplet (except, of course, in the odes), and so is interesting also from the standpoint of literary history.

"If you're so out of love with Happiness / To quit a College life, and learned ease," Oldham says in the opening lines of "A Satyr Addressed to a Friend, that is about to leave the University, and come abroad in the World," "Convince me first, and some good Reasons give, / What methods and designs you'll take to live" (1-4). This poem satirizes a society in which the man who expects to make a living with his brains is forced into a position of dependency, the alternative being to teach in a university. Oldham reminds his friend

How many men of choice, and noted parts,  
Well fraught with Learning, Languages, and  
Arts,  
Designing high Preferment in their mind,  
And little doubting good success to find,  
With vast and tow'ring thoughts have flock'd to Town,  
But to their cost soon found themselves undone,  
Now to repent, and starve at leisure left,  
Of miseries last Comfort, Hope bereft [.].

(11-18)

However, for the sake of argument, Oldham agrees to "draw the Prospect, and the Scene / To all advantage possibly we can" (21-22). Reminding his friend that "your whole Estate, / And all your Fortune lies beneath your Hat" and
that "Learning must be your Trade," Oldham enumerates the possible employments. First, there is Holy Orders, which is immediately objected to:

If you for Orders, and a Gown design, Consider only this, dear Friend of mine, The Church is grown so over-stock'd of late, That if you walk abroad, you'll hardly meet More Porters now than Parsons in the street. (39-43)

The second possibility is a "School," where one might "with Birchen Scepter . . . command at will, / Greater than Busby's self, or Doctor Gill" (55-56). But this choice is devastated even more completely than the ministry:

But who would be to the vile Drudg'ry bound Where there so small encouragement is found? Where you for recompence of all your pains Shall hardly reach a common Fidler's gains? For when you've toil'd, and labour'd all you can, To dung, and cultivate a barren Brain: A Dancing Master shall be better paid, Tho he instructs the Heels, and you the Head. (56-63)

The only remaining possibility is to "light in some noble Family; / Diet, an Horse, and thirty pounds a year, / Besides the advantage of his Lordships ear" (71-73). This is the most odious of all, and Oldham's antipathy toward it keynotes the poem's real theme. His description of the life of a household tutor (given accuracy by his having held such a position) discloses his revulsion at being utterly dependent on an employer:
Little the unexperienc'd Wretch does know,  
What slavery he oft must undergo:  
Who tho in silken Skarf, and Cassock drest,  
Wears but a gayer Livery at best:  

Soon as the Tarts appear, Sir Crape, withdraw!  
Those Dainties are not for a spiritual Maw:  
Observe your distance, and be sure to stand  
Hard by the Cistern with your Cap in hand:  

For meer Board-wages such their Freedom sell,  
Slaves to an Hour, and Vassals to a Bell:  
And if th' enjoyment of one day be stole,  
They are but Pris'ners out upon Parole:  
Always the marks of slavery remain,  
And they, tho loose, still drag about their  
Chain.  

(76-95)

This leads into the crucial passage of the poem, an  
unequivocal declaration of personal independence which is  
the core of Oldham's ideal existence. Maren-Sofie Røstvig,  
in her excellent study of the "Happy Man" theme in seven-  
teenth-century literature, comments on the Restoration mani-  
festation of the tradition in this manner:

The self-centredness of the Happy Man of the  
Restoration was his most distinctive charac-  
teristic. . . . Self-love and self-sufficiency  
provided the only true basis for the happiness  
of city wits as of ministers. . . . The blithe  
negation of all public responsibility was an-  
other of the ways in which the Epicurean bias  
of this generation manifested itself.  

It is this traditional withdrawal which informs "A Satyr  
Addressed to a Friend," and it has its culmination in these  
lines:

'T has ever been the top of my Desires,
The utmost height to which my wish aspires,
That Heav'n would bless me with a small Estate,
Where I might find a close obscure retreat;
There, free from Noise, and all ambitious ends,
Enjoy a few choice Books, and fewer Friends,
Lord of my self, accountable to none,
But to my Conscience, and my God alone:
There live unthought of, and unheard of, die,
And grudge Mankind my very memory.  

(115-124)

Almost every element of the tradition mentioned by Miss Røstvig is illustrated in these lines, most notably the "self-centredness" and "self-sufficiency" so important to the Restoration "Happy Man," the "innocent Epicure," as Miss Røstvig calls him.

III

Oldham's employment of satiric techniques usually regarded as Elizabethan, especially important for the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, is noteworthy in three of his shorter satires: "A Satyr upon a Woman Who by Her Falshood and Scorn Was the Death of My Friend," "Upon a Printer that Exposed Him by Printing a Piece of His Grossly Mangled, and Faulty," and "Upon the Author of a Play Call'd Sodom." As the titles indicate, these are aimed at individuals. Consequently, the distinction between the "real" John Oldham and the "I" of these satires is considerably more blurred even than in the Satyrs upon the Jesuits. By the
same token, their feeling of indignant rage is more intense. Whereas the Jesuit satires build to an imprecatonal vastness to combat the vastness of Jesuitical evil, these shorter satires concentrate their force on individuals who have committed specific wickednesses. But the tone is the same; the satirist, conscious of his power to devastate, launches a furious attack against his victims.

"No she shall ne're escape, if Gods there be," Oldham writes at the beginning of "A Satyr upon a Woman," "Unless they perjur'd grow, and false as she." The feeling of his role as avenger pervades this satire, as it does the other two, and as it does the Satyrs upon the Jesuits. Although the villain may have escaped punishment so far, he (or in this case, she) can never elude the satirist's barbs. In a manner reminiscent of the accumulative technique so effectively used in the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, Oldham now enumerates the various possibilities of punishment which the "woman" has somehow escaped:

Though no strange Judgment yet the Murd'ress seize
To punish her, and quit the partial Skies:
Though no revenging lightning yet has flasht
From thence, that might her criminal beauties blast:
Tho they in their old lustre still prevail,
By no disease, nor guilt it self made pale:

Though that kind soul, who now augments the blest,
Thither too soon by her unkindness chas'd;
Tho Ill-made Law no Sentence has ordain'd
For her, no Statute has her Guilt arraign'd;
Tho she from Justice of all these go free
And boast perhaps in her success, and cry,
'Twas but a little harmeless perjury:

Though all of these have failed, the satirist will now
atone for his friend's death with his satiric power:

Yet think she not, she still secure shall
prove,
Or that none dare avenge an injur'd Love:
I rise in Judgement, am to be to her
Both Witness, Judge, and Executioner:
Arm'd with dire Satyr, and resentful spite,
I come to haunt her with the ghosts of Wit.
My Ink unbaid starts out, and flies on her,
Like blood upon some touching murderer;
And shou'd that fail, rather than want, I
wou'd,
Like Haggs, to curse her, write in my own
blood.

(28-37)

Oldham next calls on his cankered muse to "Assist with
Malice, and your mighty aid / My sworn Revenge, and help me
Rhime her dead" (40-41). He is here, in particular echoing
the traditional conception of the satirist as one endowed
with magical powers of destruction, a conception that colors
this and the other satires in the Elizabethan vein. While
this idea was traditional, it was mentioned in the Restora-
tion much less frequently than in the early part of the
century, and Oldham's preoccupation with it is another in-
stance of his preference for the earlier type of satire.
R. C. Elliott's study discusses the idea in detail, tracing
it ultimately to the legend of Archilochus, inventor of the iamb, who by the force of his satire caused Lycambe and his daughter to hang themselves. When he talks about English satirists who wrote in this tradition, Elliott turns to Ben Jonson and to Marston for his examples:
"... Ben Jonson threatens to write iambics that will make his enemies hang themselves [Poetaster, "To the Reader"] ... Marston's Lampathio Doria shouts: "I'll rhyme thee dead. / Look for the satire ..." [What You Will, II, i, 121-122].12 But as Elliott goes on to say, "We understand the language as figurative."13 Jonson, Marston, and Oldham do not actually mean that they are going to kill their victims, except symbolically. But there is unquestionably a real intent on the satirist's part to hurt his victim in some way. Although Oldham probably would not expect the "Woman" of his satire to commit suicide out of shame, as Lycambe and his daughter did, he does not stop far short of that:

Grant my strong hate may such strong poison cast,
That every breath may taint, and rot, and blast,
Till one large Gangrene quite o'respread her fame
With foul contagion; till her odious name,
Spit at, and curse by every mouth like mine,
Be terror to her self, and all her line. (46-51)

And in the satire on the printer, Oldham draws explicitly on the Archilochus legend.14
Since her external beauty was the cause of his friend's fatal love, Oldham orients his "Satyr upon a Woman" around physical characteristics. First, there is the sharp contrast between her physical beauty and her inner ugliness: she "wears an humane image stampt on Fiend"; "All those gay charming looks, that court the eye, / Are but an ambush to hide treachery"; "A painted skin stuff'd full of guile and liyes"; and "Within a gawdy Case, a nasty Soul, / Like T---- of quality in a gilt Close-stool." As the satire nears its climax in the "Curses" which Oldham heaps upon his victim, there is a crescendo of physical images, disgusting in conception and expression, attempting to make her outward appearance match her soul. "But since her Guilt description does out-go," Oldham says, "I'll try if it out-strip my Curses too."

First, for her Beauties, which the Mischief brought,
May she affected, they be borrow'd thought,
By her own hand, not that of Nature wrought:
Her Credit, Honour, Portion, Health, and those
Prove light, and frail, as her broke Faith and Vows.
Some base unnam'd Disease, her Carkass foul,
And make her Body ugly, as her Soul.
Cankers, and Ulcers eat her, till she be,
Shun'd like Infection, loath'd like Infamy.
Strength quite expir'd, may she alone retain
The snuff of Life, may that unquench'd remain,
As in the damn'd, to keep her fresh for pain:
Hot Lust light on her, and the plague of Pride
On that, this ever scorn'd, as that denied:
Ach[], Anguish, horror, grief, dishonour, shame
Pursue at once her body, soul, and fame.

(113-128)
To make the revenge complete, she must be cursed with a
love as futile as that of the "friend" she killed:

Be some Diseas'd, and ugly wretch her fate,
She doom'd to love of one, whom all else hate.
May he hate her, and may her destiny
Be to despair, and yet love on, and die;
Or to invent some wittier punishment,
May he, to plague her, out of spite consent;
May the old fumbler, though disabled quite,
Have strength to give her Claps, but no delight:
May he of her unjustly jealous be
For one that's worse, and uglier far than he:
May's Impotence balk, and torment her lust,
Yet scarcely her to dreams, or wishes trust:
Forc'd to be chast, may she suspected be,
Share none o' th' Pleasure, all the Infamy.

(133-146)

The climax of the poem follows. The satiric technique
so consistently evident in the Satyrs upon the Jesuits,
springing, as I have suggested, from an implied allusion
to the idea of the microcosm, underlies the climactic
passage of this satire as well. Having enumerated spe-
cifically the curses he wishes may descend upon the woman,
Oldham now attempts to contract all curses to this one
creature, until even the imagination of Heaven is exhausted:

In fine, that I all curses may compleat
(For I've but curs'd in jest, rallies yet)
What'e're the Sex deserves, or feels, or fears,
May all those plagues be hers, and only hers;
What'e're great Favourites turn'd out of doors,
Scorn'd Lovers, bilk'd and disappointed Whores,
Or losing Gamesters vent, what Curses e're
Are spoke by sinners raving in despair:
All those fall on her, as they're all her due,
Till spite can't think, nor Heav'n inflict anew.

(147-156)
The "Satyr upon a Woman" is surpassed in intensely personal attack only by the obscene satire "Upon the Author of a Play call'd Sodom." Oldham's attack here centers on the excessive obscenity of the play; his method is to counter with even greater obscenity. The poem did not appear in the early editions of Oldham, but was published in Rochester's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1680). It is unquestionably by Oldham, however, as his "notebook" (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 123) shows it in the process of composition. At any rate, although his poem is obscene, it is pointedly so. Oldham attempts to undermine Sodom's appeal, its lewdness, by accusing the author of failure to be lewd in the only permissible way, the "witty" way. The poem begins mildly enough:

Tell me abandon'd Miscreant, prithee tell,  
What damned Pow'r invok'd and sent from Hell;  
(If Hell, were bad enough) did thee inspire,  
To write, what Fiends asham'd wou'd blushing hear?  

(1-4)

The passage is typical of Oldham's method. The Jesuits were too bad to have come from hell; Garnet wanted to surpass Satan in evil; and now this author is too despicable to have been inspired by hell.

Such contemptibleness beggars description, as it were:

Disgrace to Libels! Foyle to very shame,  
Whom 'tis a scandal to vouchsafe to damn.
What foul discriptions foul enough for thee,  
Sunk quite below the reach of infamy?  

(13-16)

The playwright has failed in his supposed desire to be ribald  
in a witty way, and this is what makes his play despicable:

Thou covet'st to be lewd, but want'st the  
might,  
And art all over Devil, but in Wit.  
Whose Muse, is impotent to that degree,  
'T had need like Age, be whipt to Lechery.

(17-21)

Here the poem launches into its obscene climax. It is important to notice that in the following passage, Oldham is  
attacking the playwright specifically as a poet—not as a  
person, like the woman in the earlier satire:

Like Ulcers, thy impostum'd Aaddle Brains,  
Drop out in Matter, which thy Paper stains:  
Whence nauseous Rhymes, by filthy Births  
proceed,

Thy Muse has got the Flow'rs, and they ascend,  
As in some Green-Sick Girl, at upper end.  

(24-29)

Oldham's poem concludes with a suggestion of a suitable use  
for the play Sodom; once more, the passage is quite obscene,  
but clever, and it wittily provides the ultimate, devastat-  
ing blow to the play:

Or (if I may ordain a Fate more fit)  
For such foul, nasty, Excrements of Wit,  
May they condemn'd to th' publiick Jakes, be lent,
(For me I'd fear the Piles, in vengeance sent
Shou'd I with them prophane my Fundament)
There bugger wiping Porters, when they shite,
And so thy Book, it self, turn Sodomite.

(47-53)

The satire upon a printer ("That exposed him by Printing a Piece of his grossly mangled, and faulty") is perhaps the most "Elizabethan" of Oldham's satires. His role as a satirist, the duties and powers of the satirist, and the irascible personality traditionally attributed to the satirist are explicitly enunciated throughout the poem, in the manner of Hall and Marston and their contemporaries. This poem is undoubtedly foremost among those that prompted Dobrée to conclude that Oldham seemed "to have been born with what we would call 'a chip on his shoulder'" and that he had a "sardonic temperament."¹⁸ "Dull, and unthinking!", Oldham begins his address to the printer, "hadst thou none but me /
To Plague, and urge to thine own Infamy?" Had he been "some tame and sneaking Author," Oldham continues, he might have forgiven the printer; but

... I whom spleen, and manly rage inspire,
Brook no affront, at each offence take fire:
Born to chastise the Vices of the Age,
Which Pulpits dare not, nor the very Stage:
Sworn to lash Knaves of all degrees, and spare
None of the kind, however great they are:
Satyr's my only Province, and delight,
For whose dear sake alone I've vow'd to write:
For this I seek occasions, court Abuse,
To shew my Parts, and signalize my Muse:
Fond of a Quarrel, as young Bullies are
To make their Mettle, and their Skill appear:
And didst thou think I would a wrong acquit,
That touch'd my tender'st part of Honour, Wit?

(11-24)

Having pictured himself as the traditional satirist—irascible, unforgiving, quick-tempered—Oldham next develops the idea of the power of satire as a weapon. "I wear my Pen, as others do their Sword," he says:

To each affronting Sot, I meet, the word
Is Satisfaction: strait to Thrusts I go,
And pointed Satyr runs him through and through.

(35-38)

This poem probably more than any other in the Restoration draws on the tradition of the power of satire, which is the thesis of R. C. Elliott's book. The conception of satire as a concrete weapon evident in the passage above is traced by Elliott to Archilochus, whose satire caused Lycambes to hang himself.19 Oldham specifically alludes to this legend as he says to the printer:

If thou to live in Satyr so much thirst,
Enjoy thy wish, and Fame, till envy burst,
Renown'd, as he, whom banish'd Ovid curst:
Or he, whom old Archilochus so stung
In Verse, that he for shame, and madness hung:
Deathless in infamy, do thou so live,
And let my Rage, like his, to Halters drive.

(45-51)

"Since thou hast brav'd my vengeance thus," Oldham concludes his preamble, "prepare, / And tremble from my Pen thy Doom to hear" (60-61). The actual denunciation of the printer
comprises relatively few lines (about thirty of a total of ninety-seven); and at the end of the poem, Oldham returns once more to himself as satirist: "And may no saucy Fool have better Fate / That dares pull down the Vengeance of my Hate" (96-97).

If this poem seems pertinent to Elliott's thesis, it is no less so to Kernan's, for uppermost in Oldham's poem are the very claims of personal irascibility and of poetic power that Kernan sees as components of the satiric mask. That these disparate approaches to satire can be reconciled in this poem, more perhaps than in any other Restoration poem, illustrates Oldham's close ties with Elizabethan and Jacobean satire--giving new resonance to Dryden's lament, "too little, and too lately known."
Notes

1 "Why indeed shall Romans grant this license to Caecilius and Plautus, and refuse it to Virgil and Varus? And why should I be grudged the right of adding, if I can, my little fund, when the tongue of Cato and Ennius has enriched our mother-speech and brought to light new terms for things?" (Latin text and translation taken from Horace: Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica, tr. H. R. Fairclough [London and New York, 1926], pp. 454-455). Jonson's translation is:

What's that thing,
A Roman to Caecilius will allow,
Or Plautus, and in Virgil disavow,
Or Varus? Why am I now envi'd so,
If I can give some small increase? when, loe,
Cato's and Ennius tongues have lent much worth,
And wealth unto our language; and brought forth
New names of things.

2 Lives of the Poets, III, 176.


5 Fairclough, p. 471.

6 Ibid., p. 481.

7 The separation of lovers by the sea has a long elegiac tradition. See, for example, Propertius' eighth and seventeenth elegies of the first Book:

... Ah, would that the wintry season's storms were doubled, and the Pleiads' rising delayed, that the sailor might tarry idle and the cables
ne'er be loosed from the Tyrrhene strand nor
the cruel breeze make light of my prayers to
thee; and yet may I never see such winds subside,
when thy bark puts out to sea and the wave bears
it afar, leaving me rooted on the shore, shaking
clenched hands and crying out upon thy cruelty[..]
(Propertius, tr. H. E. Butler [London and New York,
1912], pp. 21-23).

Deservedly, since I have had the heart to fly
from my mistress, do I now cry to the lonely
sea-mews, nor shall Cassiope give her wonted
welcome to my bark, and all my prayers fall
idly on a heartless shore. . . . Perish the
man, whose' er he was, that first devised ships
and sails, and first voyaged over the unwilling
deep! Easier task had it been to overcome my
mistress' heart--cruel was she, yet peerless
among women!--than thus to gaze on shores
fringed with unknown forests and seek in vain
for the desired sons of Tyndareus. (Ibid., p. 47).

8 Bibliography of Oldham, p. 7. Brooks seems to have
overlooked Cecil A. Moore's anthology, Restoration Litera-
ture: Poetry and Prose, 1660-1700 (New York, 1934), which
includes "The Careless Good Fellow."

9 David Ogg, England in the Reign of Charles II (Ox-
ford, 1934), I, 76.

10 The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of

11 Evident particularly in the Prologue. See above,
Chapter II, page 31.

12 Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic,

13 Loc. cit.

14 See below, page 160.
15 The authorship of Sodom is uncertain. Johannes Prinz finds the evidence overwhelmingly in Rochester's "favour, or rather . . . discredit" (John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester: His Life and Writings [Leipzig, 1927], pp. 172 ff.). However, James Thorpe, the editor of Rochester's Poems on Several Occasions (Princeton, 1950), believes that "the fact that Oldham (who cultivated Rochester) wrote in these terms about the author of Sodom is a . . . suggestion that Rochester did not write Sodom--or that Oldham thought he did not" (pp. 188-189).


19 See above, pages 153-154.

Conclusion

Once more, hail and farewell; farewell thou young,
But ah too short, Marcellus of our Tongue;
Thy brows with Ivy, and with Laurels bound;
But Fate and gloomy Night encompass thee around.

Perhaps the most notable quality of Dryden's carefully expressed elegy to Oldham is its restraint. "That poem," writes Bonamy Dobrée, is "admirably controlled in its statement, saying not a word more or less than Dryden intended." It was first published in the Remains of Mr. John Oldham in Verse and Prose (1684), along with commemorative verses by Flatman, Tate, D'Urfey, Andrews, Wood, Gould, and others. The traditional practice in this kind of poem, of course, is exaggerated praise, unqualified declarations of the subject's poetic and personal excellence, and the like; but for Dryden's, the elegies to Oldham are no exceptions.

Flatman's "On the Death of Mr. John Oldham," described as a "Pindarique Pastoral Ode," meets the conventions of that form. "Astragon" (Flatman) deplores the death of "Menalcas" (Oldham) and the lack of recognition which has met his worth:

... Of whom so loudly Fame has spoke
In the Records of her immortal Book,
Whose disregarded Worth Ages to come
Shall wail with Indignation o'er thy Tomb.
Worthy wert thou to live, as long as Vice
Should need a Satyr, that the frantick Age
Might tremble at the lash of thy poetick Rage.

(24-30)
Now that "Menalcas" is dead, wicked men need have no fear
of being exposed:

Th' untutor'd World in after Times
May live uncensur'd for their Crimes,
Freed from the Dreads of thy reforming Pen,
Turn to old Chaos once again.

(31-34)

Flatman carries the implications of this passage a little
further, praising Oldham for the reforming power of his
poetry:

Of all th' instructive Bards, whose more than
Theban Lyre,
Could savage Souls with manly Thoughts inspire,
Menalcas worthy was to live.
Say, you his Fellow-Shepherds that survive,
Tell me, you mournful Swains,
Has my ador'd Menalcas left behind;
In all these pensive Plains
A gentler Shepherd with a braver mind:
Which of you all did more Majestick Show,
Or wore the Garland on a sweeter Brow?

(35-44)

The poem concludes, expectedly, with the apotheosis. "Men-
alcas" now possesses "Perfect Ease and soft Recess"; the
"treacherous World no more shall him deceive"; he has "taken
leave" of "Hope and Fortune," and

... now in mighty Triumph does he reign,
(His Head adorn'd with Beams of Light)
O'er the unthinking Rabble's Spite,
And the dull wealthy Fool's disdain.

(56-59)
Finally, Flatman declares that Oldham need not "for his Memory . . . provide; / For he might well foresee his Praise can never end" (63-64).

Nahum Tate's short poem "In Memory of the Author" discloses as much insight into his own sick mind as admiration for Oldham; yet it seems therefore more genuine than any of the elegies besides Dryden's. "Take this short summon'd loose unfinisht Verse," he says, "Cold as thy Tomb, and sudden as thy Herse; / From my sick Thoughts thou canst no better crave, / Who scarce drag Life, and envy thee thy Grave" (1-4). Although he feels unable to write the usual kind of elegy (for "My Ink o'er flows with Spleen, my Blood with Gall"), his sense of loss is no less poignant:

Yet, sweet Alexis, my esteem of thee
Was equal to thy Worth and Love for me.
Death is thy Gain—that Thought affects me most,
I care not what th' ill-natur'd World has lost.

Oldham's death itself has prevented his composing a fitting tribute, Tate says, and so he will limit his mourning to that of a friend, rather than a fellow poet:

For Wit with thee expir'd, how shall I grieve?
Who grudge th' ingrateful Age what thou didst leave,
The Tribute of their Verse let others send,
And mourn the Poet gone, I mourn the friend.

Tate concludes with a gracious tribute to Oldham's odes to Jonson and Homer:
Enjoy thy Fate, thy Voice in Anthems raise;  
So well tun'd here on Earth to our Apollo's  
Praise:  
Let me retire, while some sublimer Pen  
Performs for thee what thou hast done for Homer  
and for Ben.  

(27-30)

Thomas Durfey ("On the Ensuing Poems of Mr. John Oldham, 
and the Death of His Good Friend the Ingenious Author") is  
more unrestrained. He was, he says,  

Possest with Spleen, which Melancholy bred,  
When Rumor told me that my Friend was dead,  
That Oldham honour'd for his early Worth,  
Was cropt, like a sweet Blossom from the Earth,  
Where late he grew, delighting every Eye  
In his rare Garden of Philosophy.  

(5-10)

Durfey's account of Oldham's poetic career is interesting,  
because it portrays Oldham as naturally kind-hearted, turn-  
ing to satire reluctantly and only when his indignation had  
overwhelmed him:

None was more skilful, none more learn'd than  
he,  
A Poet in its sacred Quality:  
Inspir'd above, and could command each Passion,  
Had all the Wit without the Affectation.  
A calm of Nature still possesst his Soul,  
No canker'd Envy did his Breast controll:  
Modest as Virgins that have never known  
The jilting Breeding of the nauseous Town;  
And easie as his Numbers that sublime  
His lofty Strains, and beautifie his Rhime,  
Till the Time's Ignomy inspir'd his Pen,  
And row'd the drowsie Satyr from his Den;  
Then fluttering Fops were his Aversion still,  
And felt the Power of his Satyrick Quill.  

(21-34)²
Durfey continues with a summary of Oldham's qualities. He looked on the "Age . . . with impartial Eyes, / And aim'd not at the Person, but the Vice" (39-40); he had "perus'd" Homer carefully, and "that great Genius to the World infus'd" (43-44); his "Reason" knew "Immortal Virgil, and Lucretius too" (45); he, "Like Ovid, could the Ladies Hearts assail, / With Horace sing, and lash with Juvenal" (47-48). He was the "modest Type of perfect Man" (51).

The eclectic Oldham described by Durfey is echoed by Thomas Andrews, who in his poem "On the Death of Mr. John Oldham" remembers his young colleague as

In Love how soft, in Satyr how severe?  
In Passion moving, and in Rage austere!  
Virgil in Judgment, Ovid in Delight,  
An Easie Thought with a Meonian Flight;  
Horace in Sweetness, Juvenal in Rage,  
And even Bibliis must each Heart engage!  
(31-36)

the last line recalling Oldham's translation of The Passion of Byblis. To Andrews, Oldham was the

. . . mighty Genius of our Isle,  
Whose forward Parts made all our Nation smile,  
In whom both Wit and Knowledge did conspire,  
And Nature gaz'd as if she did admire  
How such few years such Learning could acquire.  
(5-9)

Like Durfey (who considered Oldham "Unskill'd in nought that did with Learning dwell, / But Pride to know he understood it well"), Andrews praises Oldham's modesty:
Humble, though courted, and what's rare to see,
Of wondrous Worth, yet wondrous Modesty.
So far from Ostentation he did seem,
That he was meanest in his own Esteem.

(39-42)

And like Tate, who recalled the odes to Homer and Jonson,
Andrews gives recognition to Oldham's odes to Spenser and Jonson:

But hold! methinks, great Shade, I see thee rove
Through the smooth Path of Plenty, Peace and Love:
Where Ben. salutes the first, o'er joy'd to see
The Youth that sung his Fame and Memory:
Great Spencer next, with all the learned Train,
Do greet thee in a Panegyrick Strain:
Adonis is the Joy of all the Plain.

(61-67)

The most personal of the commemorative poems is Robert Gould's "To the Memory of Mr. Oldham"; it, like Durfey's, goes far to refute Dobrée's evaluation of Oldham (see below, note 2). In Gould's opinion,

The Company of Beauty, Wealth, and Wine,
Were not so charming, not so sweet as thine;
They quickly perish; yours was still the same,
An Everlasting, but a Lambent Flame;
Which something so resistless did impart,
It still through ev'ry Ear, won ev'ry Heart.

(10-15)

But while praising Oldham's "Native Sweetness," Gould takes care also to remember his "Native Sting":


Thy Satyr spar'd no Follies, nor no Crimes;  
Satyr! the best Reformer of the Times!  
How wide shoot they, that strive to blast thy  
Fame,  
By saying, that thy Verse was rough and lame?  
[But] 'tis no Satyr, if it has no Sting:  
In short, who in that Field would Famous be,  
Must think, and write like Juvenal and thee.  
(27-38)

This most personal of the elegies is also the most poignant.  
Its concluding lines seem more than the genre's conventional  
bereavement:

Let others boast of all the Mighty Nine,  
To make their Labours with more Lustre shine;  
I never had no other Muse but Thee;  
Ev'n thou wert all the Mighty Nine to me:  
'Twas thy dear Friendship did my Breast inspire,  
And warm'd it first with a Poetick Fire;  
But 'tis a warmth that does with Thee expire:  
For when the Sun is set that guides the Day,  
The Traveller must stop, or lose his way.  
(39-47)

One of the most significant aspects of these elegies  
appearing in Oldham's Remains is that they praise not only  
his satires, but his other work as well. Thomas Wood takes  
as his keynote the diversity of Oldham's poetry:

Oldham! the Man that could with Judgment write,  
Sometimes in boundless keenest Satyr bold,  
Sometimes as soft as those Love tales he told.  
That Vice could praise, and Virtue too disgrace;  
The first Excess of Wit that e'er did please.  
Scarce Cowley such Pindarique soaring knew,  
Yet by his reader still was kept in view.  
His Fancy, like Jove's Eagle liv'd above,  
And bearing Thunder still would upward move.  
(56-65)
If we can discount some of this kind of praise as traditional in the commemorative poem, we cannot dismiss all of it on that basis. To his contemporaries, Oldham unquestionably seemed a good poet, potentially a great one, and the tight control evident in Dryden's poem proclaims this truth just as clearly as the more effusive efforts of his fellow mourners.

The conclusion to be drawn from these considerations, it seems to me, is that there is an obvious need in our study of Restoration literature for critical comment on the poetry of John Oldham. The few modern essays that have appeared do not satisfy this need, for they speak little about Oldham the poet and much about Oldham the source-user, Oldham the irascible political satirist, and Oldham the innovator.4 It is from a critical perspective, therefore, that I have primarily focused my own study. Such a perspective has disclosed certain consistent imagistic and logical techniques by which Oldham expresses a variety of themes.
Notes

1 Poems of John Oldham (Carbondale, Ill., 1960), p. 11.

2 In contrast to Dobrée's theory that he was "born with what we would call 'a chip on his shoulder'" (Poems of John Oldham, p. 5).

3 John Dennis remembered Oldham's translation less enthusiastically:

The Author of the Satyrs upon the Jesuits, who has translated this Passion of Byblis, has not meddled with the Catastrophe. Now the Catastrophe was absolutely necessary, that the Story at ending might make a deeper impression. ... But since I have mention'd Mr. Oldham's performance, in this Translation, I think fit to add farther, that I have been told by some, that a great many will never forgive me the attempting it after him. I desire them to consider, that the same Mr. Oldham undertook Horace's Art of Poetry after my Lord Roscommon. ... If I should affirm that Mr. Oldham had by no means all the good Qualities which are conspicuous in my Lord Roscommon, who is there that must not assent to it? ... The following Translation is a Trifle, and can never be conclusive of any such thing. To succeed in it, required neither Force nor Genius, but only a Tenderness of Soul (which Mr. Oldham's Masculine Temper disdain'd) and an extraordinary propensity to that Humane Frailty, Compassion; and a certain Felicity which usually accompanies the Dictates of the softer Passions. To conclude, I leave it to any one to consider whether a Satyrist, as Mr. Oldham was, at the very time that, inspir'd by a generous Rage, he had assum'd a resolution of exposing the Follies, and lashing the Vices of the Age, could be fitly dispos'd to excite Compassion; by setting before our Eyes an unfortunate Lady, whose Love was at once her Folly and her Crime (from the Preface to The Passion of Byblis,

4 See the survey in Chapter I above.
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